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FORTUNE AND FORTITUDE.





ST. JAMES'S PARK.

FORTUNE AND FORTITUDE.

LONDON:
DARTON AND CO., HOLBORN HILL.

1848.



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FORTUNE AND FORTITUDE;

EXEMPLIFIED IN THE

LIVES OF JACK HARDY

AND

AUGUSTUS ERRANTDALE.

By THOMAS MILLER,

AUTHOR OF "RURAL SKETCHES," "THE BOY'S YEAR-BOOK," ETC.



LONDON:

DARTON AND CO., HOLBORN HILL.

1848.

LONDON:

W LEWIS AND SON, FINCH LANE, CORNHILL.

TO

OWEN PAPI HOLMES, Esq.,

THIS VOLUME

IS INSCRIBED,

IN SINCERE FRIENDSHIP,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE present volume might, with great propriety, be called "Industry and Idleness," and be considered as an attempt to work out in words, what Hogarth so beautifully accomplished with his pencil, when he illustrated the lives of the two apprentices: with only this difference—I have given my idle boy no occasion to labour for his daily bread, but have made him live on from day to day, without either end or aim. My motive for making one boy the son of independent parents, is to show that, however wealthy a person may be, unless he follows some pursuit, or at least attempts to cultivate the mind, and becomes acquainted with one or other of the polite arts, he must lead a vicious and useless life. That it is next to impossible to live in this world without doing either good or harm, and that a downright idle person,

"Who just does nothing all the day,
And soundly sleeps the night away,"

is a curse to the commonwealth, and a plague to all about him.

Also, that wealth alone cannot produce happiness ; that any one who lives only for himself, would be better out of the world than in it ; or, to use a good old homely phrase, "his room would be better than his company." Both the characters are, in a great measure, drawn from the life. Nearly every incident in the work is true, with the exception of now and then stepping a little aside, to bring in some pretty engraving, to give my young country readers an idea of what "fine places" we have in London.

Every one of you will like Jack Hardy and his dear old mother Betty. Wishing you many years of happiness, my dear young readers, I leave you to sit in some quiet corner, and enjoy your new book.

THOMAS MILLER.

LONDON, 1848.

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CHAPTER I.

CONTAINS A DESCRIPTION OF THE OLD SUBURBS OF LONDON, ON THE SURREY SIDE—AND INTRODUCES TO THE READER, BETTY HARDY, AND HER SON JACK.

JACK HARDY, or Hardy Jack, as he was commonly called, was born in a little house, or cottage (twelve of which stand in a row), facing the Vitriol Works, on the Camberwell side of Kennington Common. In former days those little houses were pleasantly situated, but that was when they were almost new ; when Kennington

Common was one wide unenclosed space of ground, and the poor man had the privilege of turning either his horse, cow, or donkey loose, to graze there ; when men were hung or beheaded, on the very ground where the rising generation now play at cricket : then the road, all the way from the Elephant and Castle up to Camberwell Green, and bending to Brixton, was really and truly the country ; rich in the scenery of fields, trees, and hedge-rows, saving where here and there an old-fashioned house stood, almost alone, in its little enclosure ; or where a straggling farm broke the green of the scenery, with its thatched roof and well-filled rick-yard. Kennington scarcely deserved the name of a village in those days, so few were the houses it contained ; for Camberwell New Road was not then thought of ; and Stockwell seemed to rest in sleepy seclusion, amid quite old trees and deep-rutted lanes, as if it never once dreamed that South Lambeth would make an inroad upon its privacy ; while Brixton was even more primitive than when Southey wrote his early poems there, in the unbroken stillness of that old summer-house. There were no omnibuses, and very few stage coaches, in those days ; and gentlemen who lived in the country were wont to ride home on horseback from the city in little parties, or to carry fire-arms ; for all the suburbs around London were infested with robbers and highwaymen, to whom the dark fields and by-lanes afforded a ready shelter, when they

made off with their plunder. Even then that row of little houses stood, in which hardy Jack, in a much later day, was born; but they stood not as they do now; for then there were green fields both behind and before them; and the sweet fresh air came rolling for miles through delicious rural scenery, without meeting with an obstruction, and bringing with it the smell of hawthorns, woodbines, or wild roses, or laden with the aroma of neighbouring hay-fields. No linen got up in the suburbs of London looked whiter, or smelt sweeter, than that hung upon the hedges adjoining those little houses, which were nearly all inhabited by laundresses (in those days), as they are at the present time. But the good broad windy drying-grounds are gone now, and the long, narrow gardens are all demolished: a deep, yawning, sluggish ditch, and a few stunted alders, mark out the boundary of the ancient fences, where summer-houses stood, and scarlet-runners climbed; while all beyond was a little world of flowers. Then St. Paul's seemed to loom in the distant sky, as if it stood far away, and London appeared to be much further off than it does now.

In one of these little houses, lived poor Betty Hardy, and her son Jack, the child of her old age; for she was turned forty when she married; and her husband only lived long enough to know that he left his infant son without a shilling. Betty was born in that very house.

and, at the time our history opens had dwelt in it for nearly half a century : she had seen her father, mother, and sister, and finally her husband, carried over the threshold ; and had followed them to the grave ; and now verging on the vale of years, was left to struggle on, as she best could, for herself and her little son.

Many a poor mother is doomed to do the same ; and oh ! if their children would but recal all that such mothers have done and suffered to feed, clothe, and educate them, their first duty would be, to support and protect the parent now growing old, who had watched over and provided for them whilst they were young and helpless. A poor widowed mother, struggling hard and cheerfully for her little family, breathes in a holier atmosphere than that which blows abroad upon the cold-hearted and unfeeling people who live for themselves alone.

Poor Betty had lived to see many great changes in her own neighbourhood. Such had come upon her gradually, and would have almost broken her heart had they come all together ; but they stole upon her one after another, like her years : and few of us are so quick of hearing, as to mark the progress of Time ; he steals upon us noiselessly, and almost unawares ; it is only at some sudden point we pull up, and are startled to see the progress Time has made. Too many of us regret the past, and wish, in vain, that we might recal it ;

while we too often waste the present in such useless regrets, forgetting that even it is receding from us.

Not that Betty Hardy had much to reproach herself with on the score of the past; for, to her it was fraught with those necessary changes over which she had no controul, for she, poor creature, could neither prevent the land from being bought up nor built upon. She might mourn over the change—as others did—and did do so; but beyond this, her power extended not. How could she foretel that the large houses in the city would all be turned into places of business?—that the first floors would be let into offices?—that the second floors would contain the desks and stools of the clerks?—little domestic sanctuaries, where birthdays and many merry Christmases were formerly held—all now let off, and large brass plates beside the door, where somebody or another “AND Co.” reached up to the very attics. Betty never fancied their new houses in the country had such a homely and welcome look as those large, old, comfortable rooms presented; she could see no necessity for the merchants of a great nation altering their manners, or of commerce taking longer strides than it was wont to do.

Still she saw hedges stubbed up and fields built upon,—trees felled, and gardens swept away,—lime burning where lilacs blowed,—and cart-loads of bricks put down in places where the lark built her nest, and the bramble

and the hawthorn bore their berries. Nor was this all; deep foundations were dug, even in the very heart of their gardens; and many a time were the poor laundresses compelled to wash their linen over again, to cleanse it from the lime, the sand, and the dust, which rose in clouds from the new buildings. Then the high walls of the houses began to ascend, like another Babel, beneath the hands of the builders, and, slowly, a deep shadow settled upon the faces of those cottages: brick by brick did the sunshine leave them, never to come back again, saving for an hour in the high noon of day: the bright sunshine of summer morning rested upon them no more for ever. Gardens, flowers, and green hedges were blotted out; their linen had no longer the old sweet, country smell; smuts and blacks got ironed into lawns and white muslins, on which they seemed to take a pleasure in settling down; until, by slow degrees, many a poor laundress lost her washing—sold her mangle—and became a common charwoman; and amongst the number was poor Betty Hardy.

“Times get worse,” said Betty, as she came home one night, discharged from ever washing again for an old house, by a new servant,—one who had made it a study to find fault with everything she dared to find fault with,—“times get worse with me;” and, for the first time in her life, the worthy widow so far forgot herself as to kick aside the old clothes-basket, which had stood in her way,

and which had been of service to her for many long years : then, as if feeling that she had done it grievous wrong, she took it up gently by both handles, and put it into the old accustomed place, only exclaiming, "It makes one lose one's temper, to think how hard linen is to get up now, to what it used to be ; there's more ironing in a shirt front than there was in a whole shirt ; and ladies wear so many flounces in their dresses, instead of the good old-fashioned tucks and hems, that it's difficult for a plain old body, like me, to know how to do them at all ; and now all the washing is falling into the hands of bettermost sort of laundresses, who keep a man, a cart, and a horse—dress like ladies—have half a score of poor creatures to do all the work—never soil their own hands—and look down upon a poor washerwoman, like me, with my barrow and my basket, as if I were only common dirt, compared to them." But, in spite of Betty's grumblings, the new houses furnished her with new work ; and there was still one large house in the city for which she did all the washing.

A pleasant sight was it for any one who can find a pleasure in contemplating and watching the habits of the cheerful and industrious poor, to behold Betty, with her barrow and her basket, fetching her weekly load home to wash ; or returning with it, clean, to the city. Jack, who was now eight years old, was her little horse, and, with a rope over his spare thin shoulders, drew as if

he was born to drag a dray, while his dear old mother wheeled behind. And sometimes he was so happy and joyous, that he would neigh like a horse, and stamp his little boots on the hard dusty road, as if he were thorough-bred, or came of high blood ; and was so well fed, that there was ten to one on his (some day) bolting off with the barrow and Betty, knocking down a toll-gate, and doing, nobody knows what mischief. And on such occasions, his mother would “hang back,” and “pull up,” like an experienced coachman, while she exclaimed, “Be quiet, Jack, do ; or you’ll have all the clothes over.” But this was on rare occasions, when Jack had been allowed to drink out of his mother’s half-pint of porter.

And now poor Jack found a great difference ; his mother was oftener out than at home ; and the house looked so miserable without a fire, and without her, that he could not bear it ; so he wandered about in the streets, like a dog, as if looking for something he could not find. Poor fellow ! if he but knew where his mother was employed, there he would wait about all day, sometimes venturing near to the iron grating, and endeavouring to get a peep at her, in the dark kitchen below ; and now and then she was enabled to hand him a cold potato or two, a half-picked bone, or a dry crust ; and then he used to hover about, and whistle and sing, as well as he could, until night, when he would walk home with her, hand-in-hand ; and she would talk to him cheerfully—show

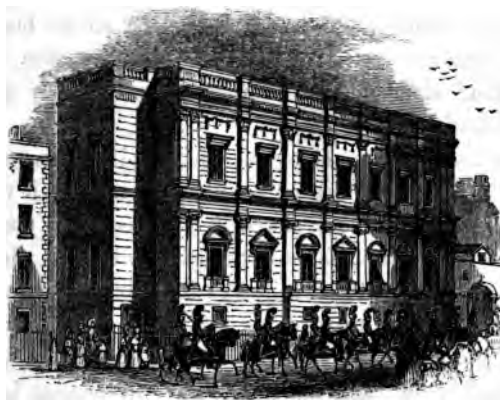
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him the white shilling she had that day earned, and the handful of broken victuals the lady of the house had been kind enough to give to her. So they trudged homeward contentedly—thanked God for all his blessings devoutly—and, with “hearts at peace with all mankind,” slept out the sleep of patient poverty and uncomplaining endurance.

Jack had a honest-looking face—hard and rough enough it was; but honesty looked out through it, as if it was made out of wax, and placed in a well-cleaned plate-glass window; for Jack never turned away his eyes while he answered you, but ever looked intently in your face, while he listened to what you said. His cheeks were rough and red as winter apples, through exposure to the cold and wind; and his little bare, stockingless legs were like rasps, when you felt them. Still, they were good willing legs, and went there and back, if sent on an errand, before you could well turn yourself.

With such excellent qualities, no marvel that he soon found friends, especially amongst those who were poor, like himself; for honest poverty has a keen perception of its brotherhood—a kind of Freemasonry, that soon answers the “grip” on its heart, and needs neither word nor sign to command its sympathy. Those who sell their wares at the corners of our London streets soon took a fancy to Jack; men and women with baked potatoes, trotters, apples and oranges, whelks, fried fish,

and oysters, pies, flowers, water-cresses and walking-sticks, all of them, from Whitechapel to



WHITEHALL,

would trust him on their most important errands. There was no one like Jack for fetching a quarter-of-a-pound of beef, and begging a bit of mustard, for he never ate the little bit that was cut to make weight. The same with their beer; Jack was never guilty of drinking half of it, and then running to the nearest pump to fill the measure up again, and making it really half-and-half; nor did he, when sent for a penny loaf, stay round the corner, and nibble off all the nice crispy brown, as other bad boys were wont to do: nay, many of his predecessors had actually run off with the money

entrusted to them to purchase the above-named articles, and had never returned. Many and various were the rewards Jack received for his labours; sometimes a roasted chesnut or two, a little too much burnt,—an apple, which showed symptoms of rapid decay,—a whelk, or a fried fish, with “an ancient smell,”—or, better than all, a small portion of the dinner which his patrons could not eat. When Jack had appeased his hunger, with whatever he could catch, he was well acquainted with the locality of every pump in the neighbourhood, and every waterman on the surrounding coach-stands; and, therefore, never at a loss to quench his thirst.

So matters progressed, until, at length, Jack got constant employment; for which he received one shilling a week, and his dinner. It was, indeed, a very humble situation, for his master was a man possessing the smallest capital that any one could well possess, who was in business for himself. It was not in a banking-house, neither do we know by what name rightly to designate Jack's new calling, although we may be enabled to give the reader a clear insight into that which his master followed. First, then, as regards the shop; it stood on wheels, and, by some people, was called a dog-cart; the counter was a large basket, covering nearly all the above-named cart: the fixtures consisted of a pair of scales, a few suspicious-looking weights, and several

measures, laced dreadfully tight in the middle, and with bottoms that seemed to have fairly strained themselves, by attempting to look out at the top: the situation was rarely in one place for ten minutes together: the stock varied, according to the season, or was ruled by what was cheapest in the market: sometimes it consisted of radishes and young onions; then was changed to early cabbages; peas and potatoes, and cherries, came next; then berries, apples, and pears, with now and then a small sprinkling of oranges; until, by degrees, they run the whole round of a greengrocer's establishment, on a small and moveable scale.

And now, day after day, Hardy Jack accompanied his master from street to street, alternately wheeling the cart and shouting "Inguns (onions) a penny a measure;" "Cherries, only twopence a full-weight pound;" or "Berries three half-pence a alehouse quart." So he shouted until he was fairly hoarse, and wheeled until he could scarcely stand; and when they had had a downright good day, his master would occasionally reward him with a penny. Hardy Jack dearly earned his wages, for he had to go with his employer to market every morning, frequently as early as five o'clock, to purchase stock for the day, and then to sort out the best and largest articles, which were sold for a higher price; and when this was done, he had a full mile to run to his breakfast. But never once was he heard to murmur: rain, blow, or snow,

there was ever the same merry and cheerful expression on his countenance; and this very willingness to oblige, got Jack's master many a customer.

At length, his employer was taken ill, and, by degrees, became so bad, that he was unable to go to market; for whilst he was well enough to "buy in," Jack managed to "sell out" without his help and always brought home a good fair profit. At last, he became confined to his bed, and, being too poor to pay for a doctor, was eventually removed into the workhouse, and Jack was left without any employment.

In vain did Jack run here and there, endeavouring to get something like a permanent situation, as errand boy; the answers were, "he was too little," or "he had never been out before, and they could not think of taking him without a character." For three whole days did he try, blacking his little boots every morning, before he set out, and making himself as clean as a new pin, and taking his cap off in every shop he entered; but all was in vain.

On the third night, Jack came home tired and hungry, and with a sorrowful countenance, for he had walked several miles that day, without meeting with any success. His mother's welcome kiss caused him to brighten up a little; but even when he had eaten his lump of dry bread, and drank his can of milk-and-water, he was still

uneasy at the thoughts of bringing nothing in; for his shilling a week had been a great help to his poor mother. At last, he jumped up all of a sudden from his little stool, struck the flat of his hand smartly on his small corduroy breeches, and exclaimed, "Mother, your barrow and basket are of no use now! if I had but two or three shillings, I would go to market and buy a little lot of apples, and set up for myself. I know I should do! I am sure I should! for many of master's old customers, whom I have met, have said 'Why don't you get a few things, and come round with 'em? we should all buy of you, Jack.' I'm sure I could do, mother!"

Betty raised her eyes from the little corduroy jacket, on which she was busily employed, stitching a patch on one of the elbows, and said with a sigh, "I think you would, Jack; but I have but one shilling in the world; and we must have a quarter of a hundred of coal, for we have not a morsel left."

"Never mind, Mother," answered Jack, cheerfully; "you shall not be so poor much longer, if I can find a friend. I don't like to ask Mr. Errantdale, though he always speaks so kind to me!" and he sat musing for a few moments in silence, until a thought struck him suddenly, and he said, "I'm sure I can borrow half-a-crown, to-morrow."

"Who of, Jack?" inquired his mother.

"Of old Nanny," answered Jack; "her that used to be so very kind to me, and allow me a penny in the shilling when I ran after the people, and sold apples and oranges for her, on



BLACKFRIARS' BRIDGE.



CHAPTER II.

IN WHICH WE GLANCE AT THE NEW HOUSES, AND INTRO-
DUCE THREE MORE IMPORTANT PERSONAGES, NAMELY,
MR. AND MRS. ERRANTDALE, AND THEIR SON AUGUSTUS
FREDERICK, SOLE HEIR TO A FINE FORTUNE.

THE large new houses, (which had sprung up before the cottages, blotted out almost every trace of the green fields, and swallowed within their larger gardens, the smaller ones of the poor laundresses,) formed a strange contrast to the humble and old-fashioned dwellings of the poor. *Each stood alone, in its lordly garden, separated from its*

proud neighbour by a high wall, with stable and coach-house within its own grounds, as if disdaining to have companionship with anything that was not a portion of itself. The little houses were banded together in a row, in common brotherhood, as if they had a fellowship and a feeling with one another, and each needed its neighbour's support. The scene might not inaptly be compared to some old fortress of the feudal ages—walled and guarded with barbican and mote; while the huts of the humble serfs stood clustering together without; their doom being the first exposure to danger and the hardest labour. But here the comparison ends; for *they* were fed and protected by the lords of the soil.

A dirty narrow road now divided the row of cottages from the stables and garden walls of the larger houses; and in this wall opened the doors by which all messages and goods were delivered, as if the fronts of the houses would have been defiled by admitting into their stately entrances, the honest people who supplied them with all the comforts and necessities of life. At the back-doors of these large houses, butchers and bakers were ever pulling at the bell—baskets came filled with wine—boys brought and fetched away newspapers—and carts were constantly calling and leaving all kinds of good things, which the poorer inhabitants did occasionally get a sight of, as they were handed in at the garden door; whilst they themselves went out and made their little pur-

chases, whenever they possessed the means, and returned with them folded up in their aprons, or snugly packed in their small wicker baskets. From the windows of these houses, lights frequently streamed out until long past midnight, while sounds of music and joyous voices gushed forth, followed by the rumbling of wheels and the tramping of horses, as guest after guest departed. In the humbler habitations, all was darkness and silence, unless towards the end of the week, when, through the chink of some shutter might be descried the solitary light of a poor laundress, who still laboured on at her washing or ironing, thrown back, perchance, for the lack of her good old breezy drying-grounds.

Here, then, were to be found, in one small neighbourhood, plenty and poverty—waste and want—standing side by side, as if inviting inquiry into that mysterious problem of unequal distribution, which takes place amongst the one great family of mankind. And yet (strange interposition of Providence!) neither content nor happiness obey the beck of wealth; but are almost equally distributed amongst the “poor and lowly of heart;” alighting, like the angels of old, amongst them unawares. Many a man would give up all his riches, could he purchase therewith that happy light-heartedness which causes the peasant to sing to himself over his labour, as if he claimed companionship with the blythe *lark, that carols in the clear sky above his head.*

Changes, however great, are not fraught with evil alone, no more than a tempest brings with it only destruction; for when the thunder and the rain have passed away, the face of the earth looks greener and is more refreshed by the change. Thus, if poor Betty Hardy mourned the loss of her garden and her drying-grounds, and the falling off in her washing; still, the new houses furnished her with fresh work; and no one employed her more regularly as char-woman than Mrs. Errantdale, of "Dale House."

The back, or garden door of Dale House, stood face to face with that of Betty's, and opened very handily, whenever she was wanted, as the servant had only just to call, and the mistress's commands were soon obeyed, for Betty was a willing and a cheerful drudge. The master of Dale House was a homely, good, inoffensive man, one who had risen from a very humble origin, and, as some said, had at first no name at all, but was called Job, from his great poverty, and Job the errand-boy, through being properly installed into that situation by the wealthy coal-merchant who picked him up in the street, and employed him. For years, poor Job was the slave of the establishment, running about all day, and attending an evening school at night, until, at last, he so much pleased his master, both by his attention to business and to learning, that he rose to be the confidential clerk, and finally, by his good conduct, to a share in the busi-

ness; for his master grew old, and found that without Job all would soon be at sixes and sevens; which said numbers (we know not why) signify "all wrong." In the course of time, the *Co.* ceased, and Job Errant became the firm alone: you read his name on every coal-waggon he owned; it met your eye on all his barges; and wherever there was room on the bright brass harness of his strong well-fed horses, there J. E. stared you in the face, as if you should see it, whether or not; nay, the very coal-sacks told you that they belonged to Job Errant. As for carmen, there were no such men by the side of the Thames as Job's—no fan-tails so broad—no shovels so bright. They were the first who introduced white stockings amongst coal-heavers: it was a hobby of Job's, done, as he said, to show that his business could afford to pay for washing. His men looked upon a sack of coals as a mere plaything—as something they could take in one hand and just throw wherever they liked. And sometimes, when you saw the waggons laden, and the men standing round with a whole pound of fat meat, laid on the top of a half-quartern loaf, and saw the great bright clasp knives cutting off an ounce at every mouthful, and beheld the large quart pewter pots of porter, which they nearly drained at a draught; you might almost fancy that you heard them say, as they glanced from the pile of food to the sacks of coal,—“Do you see this, eh? why, when I've done, I could run a mile with any one of

you on my back ; I should scarcely feel you ; you're such bits of things on the back of a strong man like me." Right proud was Job of his broad-shouldered men, and sleek, duck-backed horses.

So for years he went on, accumulating money, almost faster than he could count it, until at last he was looked upon as a great man in the city—where all things are rated according to their riches—and elected as Alderman of the ward in which he resided. Had not Job fallen in love there is no doubt but that he would one day or another have risen to the high rank of Lord Mayor of London. But this was not to be ; he was never very ambitious ; and what little ambition he had, love stepped in all of a sudden, and overthrew.

The fact is, Job had been so busied in making money, that he had scarcely ever thought of matrimony—a coin which, when taken in exchange for bank and promissory notes, for life, requires to be carefully rung, tried, and examined. Not that Job ever contemplated living single all his life ; no ; he was of too social a habit for that. Still, he thought he should have more leisure on his hands to look out for a wife, when he had made his fortune, than he could spare whilst making it.

Job was not a proud man, although there were but few in the city richer than himself ; and those were the days when rich men thought it no disgrace to meet together for an hour or two, at some good old-fashioned tavern, in

an evening, to smoke their pipes and talk over the affairs of the parish, and drink a social glass together, before they retired to their homes. Here he might be found every night, rich as a king, and happy as a peasant, whilst his unassuming homely good nature, made everybody happy about him, from the fat waiter who served, and was allowed to laugh at every old jest, to the well-to-do landlord himself, who, at these hours, left the management of his business to others.

It was at as merry a Christmas party as ever sat under the mistletoe, that Job first lost his heart, and with it, too soon, his peace of mind, for there he first met Miss Arabella Allshaw, a prim, good-looking, always-smiling, lady-like body, who never spoke without smiling, and always sat with a smile upon her face, ready for use. She was near upon forty (Job was much older); but what with abandoning caps, dressing her hair like a very young lady, and herself in accordance, she somehow managed (at a distance) to look almost ten years younger than she really was. From the commencement of the evening, she made a "dead set at Job," sounded all her *s's* so soft, and looked so smilingly sweet, that he thought she was the pleasantest lady he had ever met with; and she would have deceived a cunninger man than Job, for she had set her sharp bright eyes on his money.

After a great many visits, and many, many apologies on her part, as to what the good company would think in

the old parlour at his absence,—and how much they would blame her,—and how she could never endure any husband of hers to sacrifice his comforts, but should always wish to see him the same as he was before marriage, and much more which she never intended—why, Job got married.

All went on pretty middling for a few years ; for they had a son, who gave promise of living long, and inheriting his father's fortune ; business was given up, and the new house built ; and with the addition of Dale to his name, and ditto to his house (both suggested by his lady-like wife), Job now looked forward for many years of quiet domestic comfort, for he was a fine, hale, hearty man.

Dale House was built after Mrs. Errantdale's own plan (for we must add the "dale," in deference to the lady) ; she selected her own architect ; and though there were several things Job objected to, yet she had such a kappy knack of "my love" and "my dearing" him, that she had it all her own way at last. It was the same with the furniture ; and when there was any very knotty point, difficult to get over, she had generally one or two lady-acquaintance at her elbow (for she constantly had company to dinner and supper) who were always ready to say as she said. Job was a quiet man, and his wife had reasons, "plentiful as black berries," which she would give by the hour together ; whilst what he had to say was to the point, and said in a few words. But

what was the strangest matter of all, she seemed quite to agree with him; and endeavoured to make it appear there was no difference in their opinion, but only in the way the thing should be done; which she illustrated, by doing the very reverse of what he wished her.

Mrs. Errantdale had a great contempt for poor people, and even had her garden wall built two feet higher than that of her neighbours, and coped with mortar and stuck full of broken glass bottles, which showed all sorts of sharp, angry edges; and if you could but fancy your hand placed on the top, you felt as if you had cut yourself: not even a cat dare venture upon those garden walls. She had this done, as she said, "to prevent the many poor and vulgar people, who live in the little houses, from stealing the fruit, or overlooking our company when they are exercising themselves in the garden; which you know, my dear," she would add, turning to Job, "would be very unpleasant." A great change was that dead and glass-covered wall, to the breezy and open meadows, which, a few years before, had fronted those little cottages.

Her son, who was about the same age as Hardy Jack, following the example set by his mother, took also a great dislike to poor people; and it was fine fun for him, while yet a child, to set his brute of a dog on every poor beggar who might dare to ring at the front garden gate, or set foot on the white stone steps, which led to the ma-

hogany-coloured door. His pleasure was especially enhanced, if any poor mother chanced to have one or two of her ragged children with her, as they never failed to scream and run away, when the dog began to bark. As for his mother, her unvarying answer was, "Go away, poor people; I never relieve beggars who are so impudent as to knock at my front door." They could not get at the kitchen door, without first walking the whole length of the garden, and woe be to them if they had ventured there when "her company took exercise."

Mrs. Errantdale had named her hopeful son Augustus Frederick, much against the wish of honest Job, who would fain have had him christened after himself; but then, as his wife argued, "You know, my dear, that 'as poor as Job,' has quite become a proverb; and you know our son is born to inherit a splendid fortune. Besides, if he should ever marry a lady of title, or become a Member of Parliament, which are not impossibilities, think how his name would read in an announcement of some fashionable party; or when his speeches were reported in the daily papers: think of these things, my dear.'

"My speeches never read a bit the worse because I was called Job, when they elected me Alderman of the Ward," answered the husband.

But she had a thousand reasons to show the cause of this, which ended in her explaining the difference,—by

their son being born a gentleman of fortune, and Job being, at the time he made his speech, only a rich tradesman. Thus, from the very beginning, she had things all her own way; and Job, found out, when it was too late, that he had no longer a will of his own.

She who, before her marriage, could never be happy unless her husband enjoyed his own comfortable habits, now grumbled if he went to dine once a-week with his old friends, at the Queen's Head, unless it chanced to be on the day when she received her own company; then he might go and enjoy himself wherever he liked; for there was something too homely and honest in his manners, to mingle with ladies who danced quadrilles, and murdered tunes on the piano, which had cost him one hundred and fifty guineas. On occasions like these, when he had no other source of amusement, he invariably betook himself to the summer-house, where he smoked his pipe, and drank his cold brandy-and-water, and thought of the good old times when he was Alderman of the Ward, and spent an hour or two of an evening, in the quiet, dreamy old parlour of the Queen's Head: it was very singular, but on such occasions as these, none of Mrs. Errantdale's fashionable company ever by any chance went into the summer-house, but invariably exercised themselves at the upper end of the garden. All letters, parcels, newspapers, &c., were addressed to herself—"Mrs. J. Errantdale, Dale House:" the "or"

she knocked out of her husband's name, as if the very letters had been infected with the plague. Nay, she became so refined, that she discharged a poor Cinderella, her dirty kitchen girl, who knew no better, for saying "cold wittals," declaring that "she would have no domestic servant in her establishment guilty of such unheard-of vulgarity." Very high notions had taken possession of this Mrs. Errantdale. Had she but had one single acquaintance in what is called the fashionable world, she would no doubt have taken a first-rate house in some West-end square, and for ever have abandoned everything low and vulgar; perhaps have provided for honest Job himself, in some asylum; but as she had not, she strove hard to raise a *coterie* of her own; and to accomplish this, she fed them, flattered them, and often made them splendid presents. Thus, gentlemen with very small incomes met ladies there with no incomes at all, with whom they danced, sung, eat, and drank, and did the amiable, and found it come much cheaper than getting married and keeping up a separate establishment. A few cheques on Job's banker, of course, paid for all.

Augustus Frederick was, of course, the idol of all her visitors; there never was such a boy; so quick—spirited—so ready-witted. Had Mrs. Errantdale heard the interpretation of these words amongst themselves, she would have found "quick" to have signified saucy, forward, impertinent; "spirited," passionate, obstinate,

self-willed, head-strong; and "ready-witted," the most impertinent, low, vulgar, little vagabond that ever was tolerated in decent society. But these complaints reached not her ears: nay, to such a height had her pride arisen, that she almost thought it beneath her to ride in the little chariot with her husband, and very rarely condescended to do so, unless it tended to her own particular pleasure in a visit to some public exhibition.



NATIONAL GALLERY.



CHAPTER III.

SHOWS HOW JACK HARDY FOUND MORE FRIENDS THAN
ONE WHO ASSISTED HIM TO COMMENCE IN BUSINESS.—
AND HOW HE WAS FIRST ENABLED TO START HIS ONE-
ASS CARRIAGE.

NEXT day, Jack paid a visit to the poor woman who sold apples, at the foot of Blackfriars' Bridge; and although he went for the sole purpose of asking her to lend him half-a-crown, and, as he had said to his mother, knew he should get it; yet he had many misgivings on his way, and was afraid that she would be more ready to answer "no" than "yes."

When he went up to her, she spoke to him as cheerfully as ever, and said, "Well, Jack, what are you doing here? I thought you had got a regular place; have you left, or how?"

Jack told her how his master was ill, and a good deal more than we have made made our readers acquainted with; namely, what they said to him at every shop where he went to apply for a situation.

"I would have given you a good character, Jack," said the old woman, "if they had come to me. But lo! who'd take the word of a poor apple woman, if she were ever so honest! Never mind, Jack; try to sell a few pennyworth's on the bridge."

Jack did, running after many who never once turned to look at him; while others, who caught a glance at his good-natured face, and had, perhaps, children of their own, bought "the lot," as he called them, and sent him off empty-handed to Nanny, who soon supplied him with more.

At noon, he fetched her dinner, had a penny loaf and a pennyworth of cheese allowed for his own, and a good good drink out of the waterman's pail, on the coach stand; and felt as contented as if he had dined off roast beef and plum pudding; indeed, we have our doubts whether Jack ever tasted of the last named luxury, excepting one Christmas day, when he and his mother had a pennyworth between them, from a cook's shop in

the Borough; which slice contained just three raisins and four large lumps of suet, beside flour and treacle.

After Jack had dined, he told Nanny all about his mother's barrow and basket, and said, if he had but two or three shillings to set up with, he knew he should soon do well, and be able to keep his mother without working; that he was sure many of his master's old customers would deal with him; and that when he got better, he should go further off, into some other neighbourhood.

"You speak like a honest lad, as you are, Jack," answered Nanny; "and I like you for being so thoughtful about your old master; and if it had not been that I had paid my quarter's rent on Monday, I would have lent you five shillings myself, for a month, that I would."

Hardy Jack thanked her kindly, and said no more about the matter, but went off with another handful of apples, crying out, "Only a penny a lot," until, in the course of the day, he had sold nearly three shillings worth. Nanny never once alluded to the subject of Jack's beginning for himself, until she had paid him the three-pence he had fairly earned, helped her up with her basket on her head, and placed the tressel under her arm, when, just as he had bid her good bye, and was turning to go home, she said, "Stop, Jack; although I have no money to lend you at this time, perhaps I may have that which will do as well; bring your barrow and

basket, and meet me to-morrow morning, at six o'clock, in the Borough Market, and I'll talk to Mr. Rose, the gardener, about you; he has often trusted me, when I've run short. Now, be sure and be there!"

There was no fear of that. Jack almost flew home. He had scarcely time to swallow his tea, before he had the barrow out, and was busy with a candle, greasing the axle, to make it run easier. He looked but a little fellow behind that big barrow and basket; but he had the heart of a man. That night, he would treat his dear old mother with half-a-pint of fourpenny ale, and drink success to his new undertaking; and cutting up an old hat, which had been her husband's, made Jack two new socks for his boots, for they let in the wet.

"If I have but good luck," said Jack, "I may some day or another have a donkey and cart, like Mr. Randall; then I'll take you out into the country, for a ride; that I will, mother!"

Jack said his prayers, went to bed, and was in the Borough Market next morning, long before St. George's clock had struck six: he wheeled his heavy barrow close up to Mr. Rose's shop, who, with his little daughter, had an hour before arrived from Sydenham.

"Who do you come from, my little man?" said Mr. Rose, the great market gardener.

Jack was about to stammer forth some answer, when, fortunately, Nanny came up, and calling Mr. Rose aside,

had some conversation with him. His little daughter overheard all that was said, and looking from time to time at Jack, she exclaimed, "Oh! let him have a basketful, father; I'm sure he's honest; and his mother will be so glad!"

"Well, puss," replied the father, smiling at his little rosy-cheeked daughter, as he spoke, who sat with her cloak collar pulled up to her ears, and her little bright eyes shining like black beads from under her white straw bonnet; "well, puss, he shall have as many as he can wheel away, since you intercede, although Nanny's word would be good for a cart-load, if she needed them."

There needed no more words to the bargain; Jack was to have one day's credit, and pay for what he had sold on the next; thus, if he had much stock left, it was to be measured over again, and allowed for. Mr. Rose found two or three partitions for Jack's basket, and Nanny selected him a small stock of peas, apples, plums, and onions, for the first day, at prime cost: he had a shilling's worth of each.

Dear reader, fain would I describe the state of Hardy Jack's feelings, if I could, on this memorable morning; but they are indescribable. Couldst thou but have met him, with the early autumn sunshine streaming full in his face, as he wheeled his heavy load up the Borough, and past St. George's church, thou wouldst have half envied that happy-looking face. What! though the perspira-

tion streamed from his forehead like that of a twenty-stone man's hard at work in a harvest field, Jack felt it not; or if he did, wiped it away with the cuff of his little jacket, and wheeled on again towards home, for he was ready to burst, so that he could not call out, "Here, mother, come and look; do but see!" as soon as he got outside the market. Nay, although it was so early in the morning, he could not help calling out "A penny a lot!" every time he rested; and several men who were going to work were his customers, long before he reached home, to breakfast. Jack had never before felt so happy in his life; for there was a new feeling mingled with his delight: he was now his own master: all the profit would belong to him and his mother: he felt himself as great a man as if he had opened a shop in Regent Street, rented at five hundred pounds a-year. He had no doubt of success; he felt confident that by night his stock would bring him in eighteen-pence, clear; which would be more money than he had ever earned in a week before. He could have thrown his cap up, and huzzaed, when he came to the Elephant and Castle, and found he had already taken sixpence; he would, indeed! he was so happy; only he felt ashamed of doing so.

His mother was waiting for him, at the door; she had been to the corner twice, and with her hand on her forehead, to shade off the sunshine, had looked across the common. Breakfast was ready—coffee—yes, coffee! she

thought milk would be so cold, so had laid out a penny-farthing for an ounce; and dear old, extravagant creature, had actually put the half of it in the pot: "He shall have a good cup, for once," said Betty. Nay, she had gone so far as to lay out the last penny she had in the world, and had bought a pennyworth of butter, and, last "scene of all," had really made toast—there were two rounds of it before the fire; for, be it known, that Jack's usual breakfast was a halfpenny worth of milk, with as much water as he liked added, and as much milk taken out as did for his mother's breakfast.

When he wheeled up to the door, his first exclamation was, "Mother, mother! come and look! sha'n't I soon get rich now?"

She did look, and astonished enough she was.

"Why, my dear Jack," she said, "there is enough to open a shop, with a few potatoes! who ever has trusted you with so much?"

"Nanny and Mr. Rose, the great market gardener, that lives at Sydenham," answered Jack; "and I might have had more, if my basket would have held it: and more than that, mother, I can have what I like, every day!"

"May God Almighty bless and reward them both, and all who belong to them!" was the pious exclamation of Betty; and as she spoke, the corner of her apron was uplifted to her eyes, for two big tears had started out, before she was aware of them,—they were tears of joy

and gratitude; and if ever such things do come from the heart, they did.

We shall pass over the breakfast—say nothing of the nice sheep's heart Jack went out and purchased for his mother's dinner, or of the veal stuffing she made to it; and of the half saved against Jack came home. One thing, however, we must mention; Job Errantdale was standing at his garden door just as Jack was about to start; and when Betty, whose heart was full, had told him all about her son, and how he was beginning business for himself, Job laid out a shilling, there and then, though he had to say to the servant who brought a basket for the articles he purchased, "Keep these for yourself, Mary; for if your mistress were to see them, and know where they were bought, she would never fancy them: she might, perhaps, if they had cost three times as much."

A rare day was this, for Jack; he went up one street, and down another, lightening his load at every turning he made; for no sooner was his voice heard, than the good housewives said, "Why, that's our little Jack!" Then he had to tell them all about his master, and his illness; and they listened to him, for poor people have some sympathy with each other; and one said, if he came next day, she should like a few turnips; and another, with a large family, was out of potatoes, also suggesting, that if he left such things at home, with his mother, as they would be too heavy for him to wheel

about, how easy it would be for them to send one of the children to Betty's; it was not so far. God bless them! They all encouraged and assisted him, and were so kind, that more than once during the day Jack turned away his head and had a good cry; he could not help it; especially while one poor woman, the mother of five children, minded his barrow, whilst he went into her house and had a basin of broth. Jack, however, gave the children a plum a-piece; and that poor woman, like many others, from that day never dealt with anybody in the greengrocery line but Jack.

But we have no need to follow his footsteps all day; tired he was, poor little fellow, when he got home; but he had sold all his stock and realized a clear profit of two shillings. Oh! could you but have seen him wheel up his barrow to his mother's door, and beheld the happy expression of his countenance as he laid the money on the table for his mother to count, it would indeed have been a picture. Then to have seen him at his tea, eating the cold sheep's heart, and pressing his mother again to partake of it at every mouthful he ate, oh! you would have loved Jack, and wished him well, wherever he might go.

Neither did their happiness end here; for honest Job Errantdale—who found more peace in the summer-house, with his pipe for a companion, than he did in the society of his wife—stepped out at the back door of his

garden, just as Jack had finished his sumptuous tea, and inquired of Betty how her son had succeeded in his new business during the course of the day. Betty, of course, told him everything, even down to what Jack's customers had said to him about keeping a few potatoes, greens, turnips, &c., at home; which she said they should do, as soon as her son got a little more up in the world.

Job listened to her attentively; and when he heard that Jack had actually cleared two shillings that day, he took a longer pull at his pipe, and, after emitting the smoke slowly through his lips, said, "I have no doubt, but that, some day or another, he will be the master of a first-rate greengrocery and fruiterer's shop in



COVENT GARDEN MARKET."

"Do you really think so, Sir?" said Betty, looking

with a proud eye on Jack, who had gone to the pump to wash his face and hands.

"I do think so, Mrs. Hardy," answered Job; "and if my son was like yours, I wouldn't mind giving the first poor man I met a thousand pounds to-morrow. Jack reminds me of what I myself was fifty years ago: he needs but little help, Ma'am; if he did, he should have it. I have thought a great deal about you both, to-day, and have had a long talk with an old neighbour, who has known you much longer than I have. Your son is too little to wheel such heavy loads about, as he has done to-day; they will make him an old man before he is a young one; and (pardon the freedom I have taken, Ma'am) I have ordered my man John to look out for a donkey and a cart; both of which I shall make a present of to Jack. The donkey can stand in my stable for a few months; it will not only be handy, but save expense."

Betty curtsied low, and tried to thank him; but it was only with tears, for her tongue could find no utterance; nor did Job require any.

"He will need a little capital," continued the worthy coal merchant. "Few know better than myself how far small help may be made to extend with those who are honest and industrious. I shall lend him five pounds, to be paid back in instalments of one pound a year, on the day before Christmas; the repayment to commence next year, remember! not this. Should he be unfor-

fortunate, or anything happen, I shall never consider it as a debt ; should he be successful, and need further help, in me he will find a friend to consult with. I feel a great interest in him ; for I needed a friend almost more than he does, when I was his age."


So saying, Mr. Errantdale had placed the five-pound note in Betty's hand and closed the garden door, almost before the worthy widow knew that he was gone.

"What's the matter, mother?" inquired Jack, drying his handsome face on a very coarse towel as he approached her ; "he an't been finding fault with what he bought this morning, has he?"

"Oh, dear no!" stammered Betty ; "I don't know what he has been doing, Jack ; he has lent you a five-pound note ! But come inside, my son ; for if any house-breakers were about, and knew that we possessed so large a sum, we might be robbed and murdered before morning."

Such great and unexpected kindness half turned poor Betty's brain ; she scarcely knew what she said or did. With Jack, however, it was very different ; for, after the first outburst of joy, he became thoughtful and silent.

"I will pay him back two pounds ten shillings a-year," said Jack ; "and in three years the donkey and cart will be my own, and I shall have paid him back the five pounds beside. He has often told me, that when I got bigger, he would get me a place. I wonder I never *thought of it before* ; but it is all for the best, mother."



Jack took up the candle, and rubbed the palms of his hands with the tallow, for they were dreadfully blistered, through wheeling the heavy barrow for so many hours. A few more such days would completely have worn out the fine little fellow. Poor Betty talked a great deal of good-hearted nonsense—repeated all she had heard about Savings' Banks and interest upon money—then turned to what she had gathered in the newspapers (generally a week old), which were lent to her, now and then, from the house where she had her half-pint of beer daily; and she recalled so many robberies, which she had culled from the police reports, that even Jack, who was as courageous as a little lion, began, for the first time in his life, to think it dangerous to go to bed in a house where there was so large a sum of money as five pounds.

"I will place it under my pillow," said Betty; "then, if thieves should come, they can't take it away very well, without wakening me; though I have read of things like that being done."

"I will tell Nanny and Mr. Rose all about it to-morrow," said Jack; "and they will know what I had better do with so much money. I wish it had only been a sovereign: what with scales and weights and a few measures, and such like, I could have laid it all out."

So they set up and chatted, until it became very late for them to be out of bed, and they wondered

what time it was ; and Jack went next door but one to ask, for there was only one clock to the whole twelve houses. And Jack talked about buying his mother a clock, when he had paid Mr. Errantdale, and also the low price he had seen a second-hand set of *real* mahogany drawers marked at ; and began to wonder what a *warming-pan* would cost, for he had often heard his mother wish she had one to warm her bed in a cold winter's night. Indeed, they talked so much and so long, and Jack saw such glorious visions of wealth and happiness in the distance, that had it been in the market, or on any far distant day likely to be sold, there is hardly a doubt but that he would have entertained serious thoughts of becoming the purchaser of



BUCKINGHAM PALACE.



CHAPTER IV.

A CONSULTATION BETWEEN MR. AND MRS. ERRANTDALE ABOUT SENDING AUGUSTUS TO AN ACADEMY—TOGETHER WITH THE OPINION OF THE LADY'S FRIENDS—ALSO SHOWING HOW HE AT LAST WENT—AND WHAT HE LEARNT WITHOUT BEING TAUGHT.

"I HAVE long thought, my dear, that it is high time Augustus went to some school, if you intend him to learn anything at all," said Job to his wife, one day after dinner.

"I don't think he would like it," answered Mrs. Errantdale; "besides, I am afraid he would have to mix in the society of low and vulgar boys."

"As to liking it," said Job, "if you only study what he likes, why play and mischief will wholly occupy his time. As to mingling with vulgar boys, I think he would be puzzled to find any worse than those I have seen him amongst on the common."

"So you may think!" said his wife, nodding her head very contemptuously. "But you must remember, that these very boys pay him great deference, and never consider themselves as his equal. At school it would be very different; for one boy or another would consider himself his equal, if not his superior."

"And very proper, too," replied Job; "he would soon learn to know himself. Do you think the poor fellows he mingles amongst now fit companions, who only call him 'Master Errantdale,' and the 'young gentleman,' feeding up his vanity, whilst he feeds them out of the extravagant pocket-money you too often give him? What respectable companion has he ever had whom he has not quarrelled with and insulted, before the end of a week? None! One he set his dog on; another he pursued into the ditch; a third he cut with his spade in the garden; and even little William, the quietest child I ever met with, he pelted with pebbles until his back was black and blue. The consequence

has been, that their parents never allow any of them to come near him."

"You only see his faults," retorted the lady, "and make no allowance for his being more spirited than the generality of boys. Is he not admired by every one who visits at Dale House, for his quickness, and spirit, and becoming pride? I suppose you would like to see him sit by the fire all day, with a book in his hand, instead of riding out for exercise on his pony! Beside, what is the use of stuffing his head with learning? he is never likely to become either a schoolmaster or a clerk. Neither do I see what a young gentleman, born to a fortune, has need to know more than how to read and write, and that I intend to teach him myself: indeed, he can read now very well, considering his age."

The conversation was here interrupted by a tremendous kicking at the front door, accompanied by the cry of "Ma'! ma'!" and then a loud "Oh! oh! oh!" which told that Master Augustus was again in trouble. Mrs. Erranddale just arrived in time enough to see a fine, good-looking little fellow, about her son's age, laying on Augustus with the whip he had taken from him. Job also had hurried to the door. The lady's first exclamation was anything but lady-like; she was for tearing him to bits, and we know not what beside; the servant was despatched with all speed for a policeman; and the boy, who had thrown down the whip, stood his ground manfully.

"What has he done to you," inquired Job, "to cause you to take his whip from him, and beat him in this manner?"

"He struck me over the face with it, as I was passing by," said the boy, and pointed to the mark on his cheek.

"I saw him do it," said a red-faced old gentleman; "I was behind the boy, who neither spoke nor looked at your son until he had struck him: he has served him right. Had he been one of my own boys, I would have given him twice the whipping he has received."

"He daren't have come in, Ma', if I had had Tiger with me!" blubbered the young coward.

"I fear you have been very naughty, Augustus," said his mother, taking him by the hand, and leading him into the parlour; for she knew the red-faced gentleman who interfered in the quarrel was one of the richest men in the neighbourhood, and that it was no use her arguing with him. Had it been a poor man who had dared to speak against her son, he would have been threatened with an action. As for a policeman, there was not one in the neighbourhood who would come at Mrs. Errantdale's summons; they had been sent for too often, and, as the inspector had told her to her face, "If his men were to be sent for every time her son got into trouble, one had better take up his station in the house at once, as it would save a great deal of *running about.*"

The servant, of course, went round the corner, out of sight, where she met another servant, who was just sent on an errand, and they both had a long gossip together, when she returned, and said she "couldn't find a policeman anywhere."

Job read his son and heir a good lecture, whilst his wife was busy in rubbing his arm, which bore the mark of a good red wheal, and showed for once that the young gentleman had met with his match. The abuse which Job received "for standing by," as Mrs. Errantdale said, "and not taking his son's part," showed that he was worthily named after the patient patriarch of old; for as the storm began to increase, he commenced a retreat, and found peace and his pipe in the summer-house.

That evening Mrs. Errantdale had a few of her select friends to tea, to whom she, of course, narrated all that had befallen her darling Augustus; adding, that she had no doubt but that the boy had said something to offend him some time or another, and they all knew that he was very spirited. They also, of course, had no doubt but such had been the case, and the young gentleman, when interrogated, of course told a falsehood, and said the boy had called him very wicked names. One thing, however, sprang out of this incident, and that was, the unanimous decision of the lady's friends, that if he went occasionally to some first-rate academy, where he would

only meet with young gentlemen like himself, it could do him no harm. Then one of the ladies knew an academy—so respectable, and so well conducted—where so-and-so's sons went, and such-a-one, whose parents kept their carriage. Another also recalled the name of a third party, who quite lived in style, and were independent; and so many names came up, and such high connections were shadowed forth, that Mrs. Errantdale at last felt convinced that, by sending her son to so fashionable an academy, she should be introducing him to just such society as she "delighted to honour."

One of the ladies, rather more keen-sighted than the rest of the company, began to regret that they had gone so far, and commenced a long oration about a private tutor; but it was too late; the mischief was done; the number of servants—the houses—the carriages that some of the parents kept whose sons were at this academy—the large houses they dwelt in—and the beautiful gardens they owned, had opened such visions of visits and fashionable acquaintance which Mrs. Errantdale was sure to make, that the lady resolved he should go there the very next day.

"We have done wrong," said the lady who, when it was too late, had suggested, upon second thoughts, a private tutor would be the best; "depend upon it she will, one way or other, contrive to make acquaintance amongst some of these young gentlemen, and then

with their parents, and we shall have to make room for them."

"You talk nonsense—there is no fear of that," answered her companion, as they walked homewards together; "such a deceitful and malignant little wretch will never be tolerated in the society of people who are independent enough to speak what they think; and as to the academy, depend upon it, he will not be there a week before he is either beaten by the master or some of the scholars, and then she'll take him away, and require more of our sympathy than ever. I'm sure we ought to be paid for attending her parties, and enduring all we do from that little monster: I very often feel as if I could hardly keep my hands off him. Fortune, indeed! I wish she would send him to sea; the house would be tolerable then!"

Such were the real sentiments of several of the parasites who loved the good things Mrs. Errantdale provided for her company much better than they did either herself or her son; but they (good, innocent souls!) never once dreamt that they had contributed to make the boy what he was—that when years younger, if he wanted a brooch, comb, necklace, or bracelet, such things were at once unloosed for him to play with them, for he was such a little "duck," they could refuse him nothing; and his mother was so fond and foolish, that if he broke them, she was sure either to get them repaired

or replace them. Indeed, the best thing a poor gentleman could do with a very bad watch, was to intrust it in the little darling's hand, and allow him either to throw it in the fire or on the fender, pick it up, and when asked what time it was a few days after, just say, "The little duck has silenced my repeater until I get another," and the loss was sure to be supplied by a new one, presented as a token of respect by Mrs. Errantdale herself. Rumour did say, that more than one young lady had put on a very tender silk dress, and by romping with Master Augustus, and allowing him to get fast hold and dragging themselves suddenly away, and making thereby a good big rent, they had been enabled to possess themselves of new ones without a farthing expense; "for whoever would have thought the dear cherub possessed such strength!" Mrs. Errantdale was as sharp-sighted as a hawk in all matters where her son stood not in the way, but wherever his presence interfered she became as blind as a worm. Had it been affection only, it might have come under the head of an "amiable weakness;" but when she encouraged the boy in doing wrong solely to annoy her honest husband, it became but little better than downright wickedness.

Arrangements were soon entered into with the master of an academy near Clapham, and to this pleasantly-situated seat of learning Master Augustus was sent. The proprietor had no difficulty in discovering from the

conversation of the mother, that her son was a spoilt child, and he very wisely proposed that he should become a boarder for at least a year, and during that period only be allowed to visit home once. But this she would not listen to; he must come home every day; she could not live without him. He could ride there in the morning, John could accompany him and bring the pony back, and come again for him when the school was over in the afternoon: she could not think of trusting him alone.

So to school he went, and for two whole days he conducted himself very well, although he made up for it at night, when he got home—broke a lot of flower-pots in the garden, jumped on a large tin fish-kettle, and kicked John's shins, by the way of practice.

On the third morning at school he broke loose; for whilst a kind-hearted little fellow was writing a part of his copy for him, Augustus could not withstand the temptation of emptying the inkstand down his neck; but this he got over tolerably, by declaring "that he was only holding it up to see if there was any ink in it;" he was admonished to be more careful for the future, and the matter would have ended there had not two or three boys witnessed the whole transaction.

His next act was one of deliberate revenge. He had grossly insulted another boy by whose side he sat, and whilst they were out in the play-ground the high-spirited

lad challenged Augustus to fight, and went so far as to strike him; but Master Errantdale had no relish for such a matter, so bore the blow, and muttered what he had to say to himself, retiring amid the hisses of at least a score of his school-fellows. During the afternoon, as one of the ushers came round to see how he was getting on with his writing, he said, "If you please, Sir, somebody's taken my penknife: it was on the desk just now."

"I saw him put it into Master Harrison's pocket just as you were coming up, Sir," said a fine, dark-eyed lad, who sat opposite.

Harrison was the boy who had challenged him to fight: he put his hand into his pocket and pulled out the knife, the haft of which was of tortoise-shell, with "Augustus Frederick Errantdale" engraved on a small strip of silver. Another boy had also witnessed the act, for since the affair with the ink they had kept a sharp look-out on him.

Master Harrison had two brothers in the school: one of them was nearly seventeen, a fine, gentlemanly-looking young man, who was just finishing his education, previous to going out to look after his father's estates in India. As soon as he had heard what had happened he stepped forward, with flushed face and frowning brow, and, addressing the master, said, "Sir, if that boy is not instantly turned out of the school" (pointing to Augustus

as he spoke) "I shall immediately return home with both my brothers."

There was scarcely any need for an investigation to take place, both the young gentlemen who saw Augustus place the knife in Harrison's pocket were youths of excellent character, and came of good families; neither had they ever been detected in a falsehood. The quarrel in the yard was explained, the cause which led to it, and a score of other complaints which had never yet reached the master's ears; all of which proved that such a base little rascal as Master Errantdale had never before been discovered within the precincts of Alfred House Academy. So he was turned out of school, there and then, amid the hissings and hootings of all his school-fellows, after being well reprimanded by the school-master.

After he had gone, the master addressed the scholars at some length, and that, too, in such plain and sensible, heart-searching language, that more than one young gentleman, who had been indulged too much by his parents, shed tears, as he shadowed forth the end of the career of so wicked a boy as Augustus Errantdale. When he had finished his excellent and somewhat lengthy address, he dismissed the school for the day, wishing what he had said to settle down upon their minds, undisturbed by other thoughts.

Meantime Master Errantdale had set out on his way homeward, his thoughts, we are sorry to say, not so

much occupied with the heinousness and baseness of his offence, as the wish to be revenged upon those who had discovered his guilt. It was nearly an hour too early for either John or the pony, and whilst he was thinking what falsehood he should tell his mother, he all at once remembered that he had left his dog fastened up in an out-house near the school-yard ; so he hurried off back to release it.

Scarcely had he got outside the garden gate, with the dog bounding and barking by his side, when the school broke loose, and he was again assailed with a loud volley of groans and hisses. Unable any longer to contain himself, and seeing a stone-heap at hand, he began, single-handed, to pelt the whole school, whilst his dog kept running to and fro, and barking all the while, but partaking somewhat, perhaps, of his master's character, or being intimidated by numbers, was afraid to bite. Fortunately, one of the ushers chanced to come before the affair became serious, or there is no knowing what might have happened, for he was assailed by those who had no respect for his fortune ; but the chief thing in his favour was his happening to be so near the school. Had he been overtaken further off, we fear the master's injunction, " never to molest him, but leave his own conscience to become his accuser," would have met with but little respect. The usher waited until John came up with the pony, and the worthy coachman was just in time to take

the note with him which the master of the academy was about to despatch to Mrs. Errantdale, of Dale House, by another messenger. Thus far Master Augustus Frederick Errantdale got out of an affair which, had the knife been a purse, and he a few years older, and the evidence as clearly proved as it was against him, he would have been transported, had he been tried before a jury at the



OLD BAILEY.



CHAPTER V.

DESCRIBES THE GOOD PROGRESS JACK HARDY MADE IN HIS NEW BUSINESS.—HIS QUARREL WITH AUGUSTUS ERRANTDALE—ALSO JOB'S INTERFERENCE—TOGETHER WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE PLEASANT TRIPS JACK TOOK INTO THE COUNTRY WITH HIS MOTHER AND THE DONKEY.

TRUE to his promise, the honest coal merchant presented Jack with a donkey and cart, which his man John *had picked up a bargain*, as the former proprietor, a

most respectable vender of cats' meat on a large scale, had bought the good will of a sausage-shop; in which line he had commenced business, though we are sorry to say he did not in the end succeed, his neighbours having a dread of young kittens, of which he kept a large family. Further, Jack had deposited the remainder of his five pounds in the hands of Mr. Rose, the market-gardener: he had made an offer to Nanny, the old apple-woman, to become his banker, and it was by her desire that Mr. Rose was selected, who, fortunately, was a kind-hearted, good-natured, and strictly honest man.

And who now so proud and happy as Hardy Jack? It would have gladdened your heart could you but have seen him driving his little cart to market of a morning—to have seen the smile that mantled his handsome face—the way in which he stood—and the style in which he drove along; for there was not a better trotter on the Surrey side of the Thames than Jack's donkey; he could have sold it for more than double its cost. Jack handled the reins like a thorough-bred coachman; and he had a way of standing up in his cart when his donkey went off at full speed, that would hardly have disgraced Ducrow; a clumsy driver would have been pitched out head over heels on the donkey's back, but Jack rode his cart as an experienced sailor does his ship in a strong gale of wind; there was really a grace in the way in which he balanced himself. Then he would call

out to huge porter-drinking draymen, and great round-shouldered waggoners, to pull on one side, or get out of the way ; and they used to laugh good humouredly, and beg of Jack not to turn them over nor carry a wheel off ; and Jack promised them he would not, unconscious, poor fellow, that his little cart, compared to their heavy vehicles, stood about the same chance of breaking them as a fly does a plate-glass window by butting full against it.

Then to see him return home with his cart heavy laden ! A proud little man was Jack, as he strutted by its side, and felt that he was sole master of all that property—of all those round baskets packed up so snugly in the body of the cart, and filled with every good thing poor people needed in his line, and covered over with great bunches of greens, turnips, carrots, and celery ! A proud fellow was Jack, as he looked up at his load, or bade good morning to about every sixth person he met, for almost everybody knew Jack. Then his mother had her regular customers at home, for Job had interceded with several of his neighbours, and obtained him a great many good customers. He had also a real friend in the market-gardener's little daughter : the best of everything must be saved for Jack, for as she said, " He was so little to be in business for himself, and so kind to his mother, that he ought to be served better and cheaper than anybody." And when Jack came to market, Mr. Rose used to smile and say, " Thou must

go to thy little sweetheart, Jack, and see what she's got stowed away for thee ; for there's a basket or two nobody else must touch." Jack did so, and very amusing it was to hear these two little people driving a bargain, and how, when he could get nothing taken off, Jack closed on condition of a handful of parsley and pot-herbs being thrown in. So Jack worked on through the cold winter, out in rain, hail, snow, or frost, and thinking more of his donkey than he did of himself, when the days were unusually bleak and bitter ; for Jack, as the saying is, "was hard as nails ;" and when his hands were numbed he would beat his arms across until they fairly glowed again, and jump up and down on his little feet with a spring that would have done honour to a tight-rope dancer.

What various scenes Jack witnessed during the progress of his rounds with his little cart ! for under the same roof comfort and want were often sheltered.

Jack showed his choicest apples, and finest pears and plums to the first-floor lodger, his earliest sample of peas, and first sieve of new potatoes, for nothing was too good for them nor their children, who used to rush down, at the first sound of Jack's voice, with their long plaited hair flying like kites' tails behind, and the bunches of blue or pink ribbon (if by chance untied) streaming out like so many pinions in the draught of the passage. And the little Misses, as they plagued

ma' to buy this and that, kept crossing, first one little foot, then the other, and dirting the rather-too-large fringes of their not-over-too-clean trousers, and telling you, as plain as they could without speaking, that they received lessons in dancing.

When they were served and gone, and not till then, Jack would venture to ring the second-floor bell, and down would trip some neatly-dressed woman—not with so many flowers in her cap, nor such a parrot-pattern apron on as first-floor; but still, one who never went out without wearing a veil, nor brought such “twopenny errands” home herself as bundles of wood, and half-quatern loafs; who considered the poor woman and her children in the attics “dirt” compared to her; and although she nodded to, and was very proud to exchange a few words with “first-floor,” still, spoke of them to her friends as “proud, stuck-up nobodys.” She never bought fruit and vegetables when they first came in, but waited until they were a little more reasonable “First-floor” had generally peas and new potatoes about a fortnight or three weeks before “second-floor.” “First-floor” occasionally had a party—music, dancing, and singing; hired a landau, or a roomy gig sometimes, in summer, and went off in grand style; “second-floor” never, by any chance, putting her head out of the window to look, but peeping from behind the curtain until the carriage was *gone*, and then perhaps saying to some friend who was with

her, "Did you ever see such a fright of a bonnet?" She had a friend now and then to tea, and her husband very often took her to Greenwich on a Sunday, in summer; and if there was a new play at any of the large theatres they generally went once into the pit. "First-floor," when they did go, went into the boxes.

When "second-floor" had retired, Jack gave a long, loud single knock, and if that was not answered, perhaps shouted up the stair-case for Mrs. Pulch, or whatever her name might be—"Hey, hey, I'll be down directly, Jack, as soon as I've wiped my arms, for I'm up to my elbows in soap-suds." Then she would appear, poor, and care-worn, yet with a smile ready for Jack; although she had to shout once or twice to the children, and bid them, "at their peril, to come down." "I've no time to cook to-day, Jack," she would perhaps say; "but we must have a few potatoes, and I must send for a quarter of a pound of beef from the cook shop for my husband's dinner, for he must have something; and I'm all behind hand with my washing. What, you've come, have you, old boy, you? I'm sure, Jack, you will give away all your profits (Jack had divided an apple between the two little children, one of whom had got a doll on her arm made of the dish cloth). I shan't be able to pay you until Saturday, Jack, and there's that nine-pence standing yet; but next week, if I'm spared, I'll

begin to pay you off at threepence per week." "Oh, never mind, I'm in no hurry," was invariably Jack's answer; and when he had given her bumping weight he would often throw a potato into her apron; then, stroking the heads of the little children, pull the door to after her, as she had one of the children to carry up stairs again in her arms, dolly and all. Here they had peas as they were just out of season, once or twice perhaps, and new potatoes when old ones were no longer to be had.

It really required a nice balance of judgment to steer clear through so many opposite factions; and Jack managed to do so without giving offence to any one, for Job had one day said to him, "There's a policy in even getting a good connection for potatoes, Jack; and I've often got a good customer through sending a whole waggon load of coal to a door, when they only wanted a sack. It looks respectable, you see; and how did the neighbour know whether the men delivered only one sack or half a ton? I used to tell them never to hurry away; and letting the horses and waggon stand there for a few minutes got the men many a pint of beer. People in middling circumstances often like to appear better off than they are—it's a good old English feeling, if it's not carried too far. And you will often get a customer through showing them a thing which you know they'll never buy;

but they like it to be thought that it's not at all out of their line." Job did a good deal towards making Jack a thorough good lad of business.

Jack's cart halted in respectable-looking squares (for the Surrey side), where houses let for sixty and eighty pounds a-year, and he also pulled up at the entrances of little courts, through which there was no thoroughfare, and where the small dilapidated two-roomed houses let for three shillings a-week.

"Your court wants painting," said Jack one day to the landlord, who was walking off with an old umbrella, a pair of pattens, and a bonnet, being all that he found on the premises to pay for three months' rent.

"Painting, Jack?" echoed the landlord; "I can get nobody to do them; they take as much paint as a whole square would. One's got a fender to paint, another a wash-tray, a third a chair or two, and a fourth a table, so that the mens' pots are no sooner filled, but they're empty again. Gill says he was above a pound out of pocket by the last contract—I can get nobody to paint them. And as for repairing the windows, lad, what's the use, when the children get, one inside the house, and the other out, to play at ball—some with their shuttlecock? If there is a whole pane of glass left they are sure to aim at it."

So he went grumbling away, one of the most forbearing landlords, whom nothing seemed so much to astonish as

when he got a tenant that paid the rent. One man, who owed him two years' rent, had promised to pay him a part when he killed his pig. He killed and sold his pig, sending his landlord a "nice plate of fry," which was all he ever got.

Such were the scenes and characters amid which Jack, day after day, plodded his weary round, respected and welcomed by everybody; and whilst he was enlarging his connection in the streets Betty found her customers increasing every week at home. And so passed away nearly five years, during which time "industry brought its own reward."

So far had Jack increased in circumstances by this time as to purchase a larger cart, and a handsome poney—one, indeed, that any itinerant greengrocer might have been proud of. Nor was he any longer the Jack with bare legs and suit of corderoys, for he now wore a good tradesman-like dress on the week-day, almost too good for his calling, as you would think, at a first glance, but, on a close examination, found that it was his cleanly appearance and handsome figure, which made everything become him. On Sundays, however, he robed himself in the best broad cloth, and had now a watch, which "kept time to a minute." Nor was he without a few pounds, which, although in Mr. Rose's hands, he could, as the saying is, "at any time lay his hands upon."

And hardly had he earned it; in rain, blow, and snow,

he had ever been at his post; in the cold, dark winter mornings had the rumbling of his little cart awoke some poor neighbour, who had still the indulgence of two hours more bed, and who, with a yawn, would remark, "Yon's Jack's cart—it's five o'clock; poor lad! how it blows and rains!" So it did, but Jack, wrapped in his thick great coat, went through it all. He knew the coffee shop beside the Borough Market would be open, and there, with Mr. Rose's foreman, he would enjoy his cup of coffee, and get well warmed before he set out for home again. And when he did get home, what if his poor old mother was not up, he could light a bit of fire, and get the kettle to boil by the time she came down stairs? And before breakfast was over his poney would have had a good hour's rest in the stable, and be like himself, "quite fresh again." Sometimes he came home of a morning with his hat covered with white ryme, and the mane of his little poney hung with frost-work, while his hands were so benumbed that he could scarcely undo the harness; and, oh! the cold key with which he unlocked the stable doors seemed to freeze to his very fingers.

Then, how noiselessly he would move about the house, if his mother was not up; you might have fancied that it was only a mouse moving among the ashes in the grate when he made the fire; nor would he call her until he had swept up the house, and got breakfast ready. Then he would cover up the boiled milk on the hob, and, plac-

his mother's toast before the fire, wait for her patiently until it was just upon time for him to set out on his daily round.

And when Betty had come down and kissed her son (her custom every morning) she would often say, "Why did you let me lie so late, Jack? you know I like to be up and get breakfast ready while you look out the things that are to be left at home. I'm sure I never heard you come in."

"I dare say not, mother," Jack would answer; "but it's a bitter cold morning, and I thought you would be all the better in bed. Many a night have you sat up working for me whilst I was in bed; it's my turn now, mother, and I am glad of it. I think this egg is about done to your liking."

Happy Jack! happy mother! for how could they be otherwise than happy when each strove to outdo the other in acts of gentle kindness, which emanated from the purest affection? for if

"His head did ache,
She knit her handkerchief about his brow."

SHAKSPERE.

Week by week did Jack's connection increase, for he was a favourite with everybody who knew him; and by the time that spring approached, and the cry of "Sweet *primroses!*" was heard, Jack's profits were considerably

above a pound a week. He might have made it nearly two had he not sold much cheaper pennyworths to poor people, to whom he often threw an onion or a few pot-herbs in for nothing, where another would have charged at least a halfpenny. The little children were also so fond of Jack and his donkey, and would come running after him, half a dozen together, poor little half-clad things, just such as he himself once was, when his mother's washing began to fall off, and she had great difficulty to support him, and Jack was so kind to them, allowing them to ride when his cart was nearly empty, and sharing an apple amongst three or four of them; and many a good pennyworth did he let that woman have who gave him the basin of broth when he greatly needed it.

Still Jack was not without his troubles, for Master Errantdale never missed a chance of annoying him whenever Job's back was turned; nor did our little hero like to complain to his father, who was so kind as to find both food and stabling for Jack's donkey. Augustus was very fond of whipping Jack over the legs; and although his thick corduroys saved him a good deal, yet sometimes the lash came rather too smartly about his ankles. As for the dog, Master Errantdale could never get him to attack Jack; the animal was too fond of him for that, and would follow him wherever he went.

It was one evening in spring, when Jack, who had

finished his day's work, was attending to the wants of his donkey in Job's stable, that Augustus came in and complained of Jack having kept his dog out with him all day.

"I shut him up in the garden," said Jack, "when I went out with my cart, and saw no more of him till I got into Oakley Street, where he had followed me. I should have driven him home, but was afraid he would either get lost or stolen."

Master Augustus made use of some very unbecoming language, and commenced whipping Jack as he had often done before time: Jack entreated him to desist, said he should be compelled to tell his father, and such like, and threatened at last to take the whip away from him, which he did, but not until he had received a smart cut over the cheek.

"I will tell my mother," said Augustus, mad and baffled that the whip had been so easily wrested from him, for Jack was much the stronger, although in age they were nearly equal: "I will tell my mother, and she'll take care that you don't keep your donkey in our stable any longer."

Just then Mrs. Errantdale chanced to make her appearance, for she had been calling her son to tea. When she heard that Jack had taken the whip from Augustus, her rage knew no bounds, not a word would she hear in his defence, although he pointed to the red mark on his

cheek, but ordered him to take his donkey out of the stable that instant, together with all the baskets, &c., which Job had allowed him to place in the coach-house. You should have seen the alacrity with which Master Errantdale bundled these things out of the garden door into the road; he never did anything more cheerfully in his life; and while he stood grinning and abusing Jack, who, with his hand on the mane of his donkey, endured it all as patiently as the animal beside him, Job Errantdale made his appearance. Jack told his tale in a few words, and said he was sorry he got so angry as to take the whip from Master Augustus, and that he should not have done so had he not cut him over the face with it.

"Had you laid it about his back," said Job, "you would have served him right; but it's quite time I began to interfere, they have had it their own way too long;" and fetching his son a smart box on the ear, which sent him crying into the house, he himself led the ass back into the stable, and then helped Jack to replace his baskets in the coach-house. Having done this, Job immediately faced his wife, and terrible was the storm that raged on her part; but Job was firm as a rock, and told her that if she persisted in encouraging her son in the way she did, he would remove him to some school a hundred miles off, and never allow him to see home more than once a year. This threw Mrs. Errantdale into a sham fainting fit, which she always had recourse

to when her abuse failed and her husband continued firm ; and while the servant attended her, as usual, with the smelling bottle, Job retired with his pipe into the summer-house, to make himself cool, and wait until his wife came round again. So Jack carried the day ; and having one morning threshed a boy, a head taller than himself, who was justly beating Master Augustus, he became a favourite even with the mistress of Dale House, and Master Errantdale himself paid some little respect to Jack's prowess, although it was more out of fear than love, for our hero saved him many a beating which he richly merited.

Before the summer had passed away, Jack had made many a pleasant excursion with his dear old mother into the country on a Sunday. It was a pleasant sight to see the old woman seated on a chair in the cart, and riding leisurely along some pleasant green lane, while Jack walked beside the donkey, giving it every now and then a mouthful of sweet fresh grass. Jack knew where the pleasantest places lay, and sought out those which were free from the din and dust of coaches and omnibuses : hilly they might be, but then his mother could walk up, and gather a handful of wild flowers on the bank side, or rest herself until her son came up with the cart, Jack pushing behind with all his might, and working every bit as hard as his donkey. And so they got up *Lordship Lane*, or across Peckham Common, and over

Forest Hill, where tradition says Queen Elizabeth once had a pic-nic party, and a tree is still pointed out as marking the spot where the royal lady was seated. Whose heads she broke during the day with the gridiron, or what quantity of beef-steaks and ale were consumed before night, tradition makes no mention of. Sometimes Jack and his mother went over the hill to Dulwich, round by the Half Moon, and along by Lower Norwood, and so up to the Hog's Back, as that beautiful range of hills is called which overlooks a goodly portion of the counties of Surrey and Kent on the one hand, and, on the other, commanding a full view of London, from the Tower to Westminster Abbey, with a wide range of hill and valley to the left. And Betty would prepare something the day before for their dinner; perhaps a small beef-steak pie, or a nice knuckle of ham, together with a pint of ale in a bottle; and they would look out for some green and shady place where they would dine, while the donkey was turned loose, and left to crop the short sweet grass with which the road side abounded, or perchance to feed off more substantial food which Jack had brought for him in a basket.

Nor could they gaze upon the beautiful landscape which stretched out before them without a feeling of delight, and gratitude and thankfulness towards Him who had created such a beautiful world. There was something so dreamy and quiet in the low rustling of the

leaves, as the light breeze came and went, that they felt all the stillness of the Sabbath in their hearts, as Jack said, "It made him quite happy to be where all was so still, after the noise which rang in his ears all the week in the crowded streets." Then there was the tinkling of sheep-bells down the hill-side which sloped at their feet, or the voice of the cuckoo heard far off in the valley, somewhere amongst the woods in the neighbourhood of Penge Common ; or, perchance, a skylark would spring up almost at their very feet, and go singing and shaking its wings high up into the sunny sky, until Jack's neck ached through watching it. Delightful it was to sit on the brow of that hill and listen to the singing of the birds, as a fresh note burst forth almost every minute, and Jack used to wonder whether it was a blackbird, or a thrush, or a grey linnet ; and sometimes a bullfinch or a goldfinch would perch themselves on a bough near at hand, and he would watch their little breasts rise and fall (motionless as a mouse), until they flew away and were lost in the greenery of the adjoining wood. And while Jack rambled some little distance to get a white May bough to make, as he said, "their cottage smell like the country all the week," or a handful of wild flowers to place in the broken pitcher, Betty would take out her well-thumbed Bible and read to herself, or get her son to read a chapter when he returned—especially *Christ's sermon on the mount* ; for although she knew it

all by heart she was never tired of hearing it read, for she would say to Jack, " There is so much in it to comfort poor people like us, and I have often read it when I haven't known how I should get the means of buying another loaf, and I always found it to comfort me, for I knew that He who took care of the fowls of the air would never let a poor widow and her child want, while she trusted in Him. Then 'tis so beautiful, all about the lilies of the field—which, of course, means the butter-cups and the daisies, and every other kind of flower—which is much prettier and a deal more natural than any silk gown worn by any lady of the land, that it makes one not to care about wearing fine clothes. And all about the strait gate and narrow way, which is like the nice quiet green lanes you lead me through, Jack, in the cart, and not the wide dusty roads, where everybody rides, and which are all noise and racket."

So Betty would comment upon her favourite passages of Scripture, bringing them to bear, in her simplicity of heart, upon the object nearest at hand, and such as she thought her son would the more readily comprehend, as they would become blended in his mind with beautiful scenes and beautiful hours, such as he might recal when she was no more ; and, perhaps, if he visited those spots when a man, and she in the grave, he might remember a few of his mother's words and be all the better a man through it. And it was by such means as the

that the simple-hearted mother first instilled the truth, and beauty of religion into the heart of her son. Although many a learned divine would have smiled at the questions put by the one, and answered by the other, still there was so much good meaning mingled with Betty's simplicity and ignorance that we question if truth mystified, as it very often is, in too learned and lofty a language, would have made up for the few errors which mingled with Betty's creed.

Betty and her son but rarely extended their pleasant country tour so late in the day as not to be in time for church in the evening, for she was wont to say, "Poor people like us, who are close confined with business all the week, can't do without a mouthful of fresh air one day out of seven. But those who never go to a place of worship once on a Sunday are worse than the heathen savages that live in foreign parts, abroad ; for my part, I would go twice if I could, but I hope I make it up by reading my Holy Bible." Jack always read the chapter from which the clergyman had taken his text in the church, and great difficulty there was when they came to a hard name, which Jack would spell letter by letter, while his mother would give it the best pronunciation she could. One evening they stumbled upon the name of "Sennacherib," and Betty, after three trials, said it must be "Snap-Grab."

It was heart-cheering to see the attention paid by

Jack to his mother during these rural rambles; the inquiries he made about whether she sat easy, and if the cart jolted her; or whether she felt hungry, and if she would like to walk a little way; then, to know it was all sincere, and came from the heart, and that he felt every wish he uttered—it was a delightful picture to look at. There was no formal affection about these little offices of kindness—no wish on the part of Jack to let people see how fond he was of his mother; but the natural outpouring of a kind and gentle heart, one schooled by adversity into noble and sincere love, strengthened and deepened the more through knowing all that his mother had endured for him in the commencement of her cheerless widowhood.

Occasionally they went as far as Sydenham, and paid a visit to Jack's friend, the market gardener; and Mary was so delighted to see her "little sweetheart," as she always called Jack, and took such pleasure in showing him over her father's huge garden-grounds, that it was no marvel, to use an old-fashioned country phrase, at their feeling a bit of "sneaking kindness" for each other, and the honest gardener did all he could to make them happy, often joking over his pipe, and saying, "that so good a son as Jack was, would, when he had eaten a little more pudding, make a better man than a many he knew." Then they had such a long ramble together, and Mrs. Rose made them such a delicious tea, and Mary gathered

them a handsome nosegay ; and sometimes, with her father, accompanied them a mile or two back, that we question if either Betty or her son had ever passed happier hours than they did in



THE COTTAGE OF THE MARKET GARDENER.



CHAPTER VI.

HOW MRS. ERRANTDALE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY HER SON WHEN SHE VISITED HER FRIENDS—WHAT ENGAGING WAYS THE YOUNG GENTLEMAN HAD WHEN IN COMPANY, AND HOW HIS TALENT IN MUSIC OPENED AT LAST THE DOOR THAT LEADS TO FASHIONABLE SOCIETY.

MRS. ERRANTDALE so managed matters as to keep her son's infamous behaviour at the academy a secret from her husband ; nor did she herself view the affair in any other light than that of boyish mischief, attributing it all to " his spirits." The reasons she assigned to her

for his quitting school so suddenly were, that the confinement affected his health, that his appetite had fallen off very much, with numerous other causes, such as fond, foolish mothers generally have a pretty good share of, all "cut and dried," and ready to administer on every occasion.

Nor was Master Augustus at all behindhand with his parent. The charge brought against him at school he of course denied—so far as regarded having any wicked intention in it—and his mother sincerely believed him ; nay, the young hypocrite went so far as to pretend that the very thought of it made him very unhappy ; nor did he eat his meals with his usual relish in the presence of his mother, although he took care to make up for it in the kitchen ; neither did he go out for several days, except in her company, for one or two of the school-boys had threatened what they would do if they ever caught him alone, and he was afraid of them.

And now his mother took him with her in the one-horse chaise, to make her morning calls on friends who did not keep their carriage, and were, of course, very proud of the acquaintance of a person who did. As to poor John, the coachman, after sundry lectures from Mrs. Errantdale, he had quite learnt to give a west-end aristocratic knock, the perfection of which, we consider, is to thunder away at the door as if the house were on fire. Now this was rather absurd, as most of the houses

at which they called were very small, and as the one little servant sometimes chanced to be gone out on an errand, the parties honoured were compelled, very often, to open the door themselves. Such knocking is rather more pardonable in a large rambling house, where the servant may chance to be a dozen rooms off. It was wonderful how proud these foolish people were—not of Mrs. Errantdale, but of her carriage, neither could they, however much they might try, conceal it. They attempted to look as if they were accustomed to such things, but there was something in the manner in which they accompanied her to her carriage; in the love of having a few more words to say after the lady was seated; and, above all, in the triumphant smile they cast, before closing the street-door, on their opposite neighbours, which said, as plain as looks could say, “I hope after this you will not think we are common people, acquainted, as you see we are, with a person who keeps her own carriage.”

But even this trifling honour (as they thought it) had its price, for Master Augustus would take his dog with him, and on more occasions than one did the neighbours opposite stand at their doors to laugh at seeing the cat bolt clean through a pane of the parlour window into the street, and to see the dog with his head stuck knowingly through the hole, and barking as loud as he could. Such trifles as these did a little lessen the grandeur of these people, nor did the loud “guffaw” of John on the box

raise him at all in their estimation. These morning calls, for a time, quite delighted Master Errantdale, for if there were no cats to worry, there were sometimes the children to frighten, and it offered the young gentleman equal amusement to send them squalling up stairs with the dog at their heels, as it did to drive the cat either through the window or up the chimney.

Vain were the exclamations of his mother on such occasions; her "fie, fie, my dear Augustus, we really must leave Tiger at home," were like words uttered to the wind; her son regarded them not, for if the dog must be left at home, at home he would also stay; so there was no alternative but for the parties visited to shut up their children and their cats in another room, whenever Mrs. Errantdale deigned to honour them. "But Augustus," as his mother said, "was so amusing;" and when there were no longer either cats to worry or children to frighten, he took to buying crackers of a neighbouring firework manufacturer, and by dropping one or two on the floor, where they were sure to be unseen and go off, he managed to throw the whole company into confusion, besides occasionally burning a hole in the carpet. Then he bought a horn, such as is blown by mail-coachmen, and which he could slip in and out of his pocket in a moment, and which, whenever he blew, was accompanied by the barking of his dog; and this he called his "music for small parties." He was also very fond of

taking keys out of doors and drawers, and if not detected in the act, of putting them into his pocket, and dropping them in the street. To open cage-doors and let the birds out, he considered prime fun ; nor was he particular, if nothing else offered itself to amuse him, at knocking the heads off little china dogs and 'shepherdesses, or otherwise disfiguring their chimney ornaments. Such, amid a thousand others of a similar nature, were the accomplishments of this young gentleman.

Learning he had completely abandoned ; for, although his mother had provided him with a private tutor, the gentleman, after a week's trial, was compelled to give him up. The last trick Master Errantdale had played him, was to put half-a-dozen crackers in his coat-pocket, which, when he sat down, all exploded at once, causing him to jump up as if he were shot, and beside blowing the tail of his coat off, doing him bodily injury. After well boxing his pupil's ears, he was instantly ordered by Mrs. Errantdale to quit the house, which he [did. Job, however, called upon him, and reimbursed him for the loss of his coat, besides making him a handsome present, and giving his son such a beating as kept him and his mother in the bedroom for two whole days. But these were minor mischiefs. As he grew older he became more wicked, and his deeds were of such a nature that, if not soon checked, threatened speedily to bring him into serious trouble. He took a great fancy

to breaking windows, concealing stones in his pocket, and while his mother's head was turned, jerking one every now and then through the carriage door. This went on for some time before it was discovered ; until one day a sharp-eyed old gentleman, while standing in the little garden before his house (and whose windows Augustus had frequently broken in passing), chanced to see the hand of the young scoundrel over the half-door of the carriage as he threw the stone. Out of the garden gate the old gentleman rushed in an instant, and hallooing to John to stop, which he did, he, without ceremony, opened the carriage-door and dragged forth Master Augustus, whose first exclamation was, " I didn't break your window, Sir."

" Oh, oh !" said the old gentleman. " Then how did you know it was broken ?"

" Because I heard it, Sir."

" Very well," said the old man. " You are the same youth, I perceive, who struck a young gentleman one day with a whip over the face as I was passing. Here, my boy," said he to a little fellow who stood by, " run off and fetch the first policeman you see, and I'll give you sixpence."

It is almost impossible to describe the conduct of Mrs. Errantdale while this scene took place ; the very boldness of the old gentleman's sudden attack struck *her*, as the saying is, " all of a heap." She could not

have been more astonished had a highwayman stopped her at the front of



THE MONUMENT,

or in the centre of Cheapside in the middle of the day, and, with a pistol in one hand, demanded her purse. A hen who sees its only chicken pounced upon, and carried off in the talons of a large, round-eyed hawk, could not express its sorrow or anger in a greater variety of attitudes or cries than she did. At first she repelled the charge against her son indignantly—threatened him with an action for stopping her carriage—called upon John to get off his box, and do we hardly know what, as we dare say that

either to have scratched, kicked, cuffed, whipped, bitten, broken the bones of, or knocked the teeth out of the said old gentleman's head ; that any one or all of these would, at that moment, have afforded equal gratification to Mrs. Errantdale. Still the gentleman retained his hold, and, without evincing any sign of anger, said he hoped John had more respect for himself than to pay any attention to what his mistress said. Meantime Master Augustus screamed and kicked and made such a disturbance, that half the neighbourhood were out, and amongst the number more than one whose windows had been broken in the same mysterious manner. Never had the pride of Mrs. Errantdale been before so thoroughly humbled ; and when the policeman came up and discovered four good-sized stones in Master Augustus's pocket, she almost wished that there was a large comfortable trapdoor under her carriage, or any other nice mechanical contrivance that would have shut out herself and her son from the gaze of the spectators. But there being nothing of the kind handy, she had no other resource but to faint ; and, at the mention of the words " station house," she, for once in her life, did faint away in downright earnest. And a fortunate fainting it was for Master Augustus, for it induced the old gentleman to liberate him, and after having brought round the lady, to order John at once to drive home again, where he *promised* to call in the course of the day ; for the ir-

ritable old gentleman was half disposed to drag the young culprit all the way into the city of his own accord, and if he could obtain justice nowhere else apply for it at



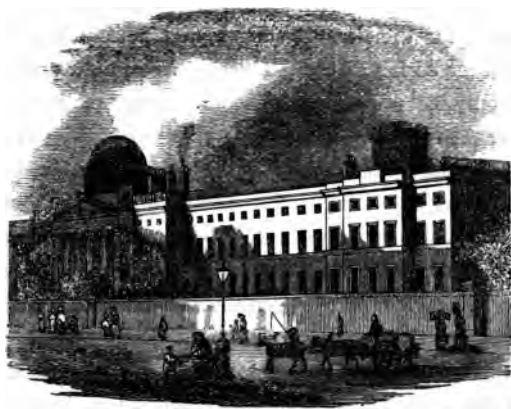
GUILDHALL.

Although the affair was arranged without any further exposure taking place, still it was a source of great annoyance to Mrs. Errantdale, and it was several weeks before she again ventured either to show herself or her carriage in the same neighbourhood. Job it made miserable; and for several days he entertained serious thoughts about sending his son to sea. Augustus was

kept prisoner for a whole fortnight, and never allowed once during that time to go outside the garden ; and we must so far do him justice as to add that, considering how short the period was, he made considerable progress in his writing, and one day produced so close an imitation of his father's signature that Job was astonished, and could hardly believe that anybody had written it but himself. And now things went on pretty smoothly for some time, and he was trusted to ride out on his long-tailed pony alone, so that if either himself or his dog did get into any little scrape, they were enabled to make off with nearly equal speed, for the young gentleman had taken lessons at a riding-school. Nor did anything particular transpire for several weeks, excepting one adventure, which, together with the good horsewhipping he received, he never even revealed to his mother ; for it chanced as he was one day riding out he saw a garden gate standing open, and a cage hanging on the sunny wall of the little cottage, which stood within the grounds ; looking round, and seeing no one in the way, and the old spirit of mischief again stirring within him, he could not withstand the temptation, but rode inside, opened the cage-door and liberated a beautiful blackbird. A gaudy bed of tulips next arrested his eye, and seeing no one near, he rode his pony straight through the centre of the tulip-bed, which was one of the choicest in the neighbourhood, and visited by florists, who came for miles around

to see it. Just as my young gentleman was about to retreat, out of the cottage rushed the gardener with a heavy horsewhip in his hand; and he so belaboured Master Augustus that he begged and prayed for mercy, and offered at once to pay for all the mischief he had done. Still the gardener laid on without mercy, assuring him that he preferred the present mode of settling for the damage done; and telling him that whenever he felt disposed for another similar treat, he had only just to ride into his garden again, and he should be very happy to accommodate him. But Master Erantdale had had more than he desired; his back was marked for days after, and so pained him that he could scarcely lie down in bed. Nor was there any one he ever made it known to, excepting hardy Jack, who obtained a lotion from his mother, with which he gave his back several dressings in the coach-house. The horsewhipping he received from the gardener produced a great effect, nor was the resolution formed and kept, of concealing it from his parents without its result. It made him more silent, more reserved, and more sullen; and not a little did it affect his pride to think that he had no friend, saving hardy Jack, to whom he dare reveal his trouble. Nor did he like Jack in his heart; for the noble, forgiving, and generous nature of our little hero made Augustus more sensitive to his own meanness; he hated Jack, because he was so much better than himself.

Meantime his passion for blowing a horn had not at all abated ; and although the noise he made was a complete nuisance to the whole neighbourhood, still, so long as he confined himself to the house and the garden, they had no alternative but to endure it. For weeks the house was a perfect



BEDLAM ;

he made noise enough to break the drum of a deaf man's ear ; until at last he became so great a proficient in music, that he could imitate the braying of a donkey, and this he did to such perfection that the whole family of asses on the adjoining common would take up the echo and join in chorus, making such a

horrible din, that Job, as he sat in his summer-house, would often thrust his thumbs into his ears, and wonder whether his namesake of old, in addition to his virago of a wife, and the gloomy cloud of bitter affliction that burst with all its thunder above his head, had ever to endure the braying of his whole "ten thousand asses." As for Mrs. Errantdale, although her son's abominable blowing did very often bring on a dreadful headach, still she endured both; "for," as she said, "it shows he has a taste for music," and every one must have a learning.

By degrees Augustus became acquainted with the son of a coachman, whose father drove from Balham Hill to



THE MANSION HOUSE,

and back several times a day. And as this youth could murder a tune or two on the bugle, and as Master Errantdale loved to make a noise on one, and had also plenty of pocket-money, he and the coachman's son were very soon sworn companions. True enough, they blew away many a good passenger between them, and the proprietors soon found their profits decrease ; but the old coachman was so proud of his son, and so much respected by all who knew him on the road, that it was a long time before their complaints reached " head quarters." More than this, he was a great favourite with Mrs. Errantdale, and as her son could not well get into further mischief while riding up and down in the coach, there is no doubt but that she paid the highest price for his amusement. Nor was this all, for finding that her son did really take a delight in his new hobby, she spared neither trouble nor expense to encourage him, but bought him a splendid key-bugle, and hired one of the first masters in the metropolis to give him lessons.

It was a very long time before Master Augustus could play an air on his bugle, but he managed to do so at last ; not that he accomplished it fairly at first, through mastering the gamut, and going through the regular rough grammar of sounds, but he remembered what keys to touch, and went through his performance with so grave a countenance, that very few unskilled in music could discover the cheat.

After twelve months of unremitting labour, the music-master, whose salary increased with the difficulty of his undertaking, did drive into the head of his pupil a few ideas, such as enabled him, after much practice, to play half-a-score of tunes, to the delight of his mother, and the astonishment of all her acquaintance. And what with his going to and fro while taking lessons, he met with several young gentlemen who were learning to play on various instruments, and so at last picked up a few companions, some of whom belonged to respectable families, although rather poor. All that the heart of his mother had so long yearned for, seemed at last as if about to be accomplished; his new acquaintance were invited to Dale House; they had concerts in the drawing-room, parlour, and garden: violin, French-horn, serpent, clarinet, flute, hautboy; and many another boy blew and scraped, and ate and drank, and told such tales to their parents of the kind treatment they met with at Mrs. Errantdale's, that more than one ma' and pa' became visitors, and Job's wife began to be considered as almost next door to an angel.

"She endures it all so patiently, and seems so happy amongst the little gentlemen," remarked one lady to another, "that really 'tis quite delightful to meet with such a person."

"It is indeed," replied the other, "and 'tis so pleasant not to have such an uproar under one's own roof, and to

know that it is not one's own furniture that's moved and driven about as if it had cost nothing. They really seem well-meaning sort of people, and I'm sure must be very rich. They must be invited to King Groom's Court."

"They must be well off," answered the first speaker, "for to-night Mrs. Errantdale spoke to me respecting the purchase of a new carriage, adding, 'that their present one was too small to accommodate herself and friends.' I promised to accompany her to Long Acre on Monday, and regretted that ours was at present at the coachmaker's, where I fear," she added, with a most lady-like little laugh, "'tis likely to remain some time, for he's been very pressing for his paltry account. By the way, how get you on with the lawyer you spoke of?"

"Oh, very well, answered her friend, "I got Sir William to insure his life for a few thousands, and by persuading the money-broker that his health was but very so-and-so, obtained a fifth of the sum insured for, upon the policy."

Sir William's real income was one hundred and forty pounds per annum. He had been knighted for presenting a congratulatory address on His Majesty's recovery from a fit of the gout. The additional "Sir" to his name had been instrumental in opening an account with several tradesmen at the west-end. Before he was

knighted, his milkman, greengrocer, baker, and butcher invariably balanced their bills every Monday morning, previously to opening a new account, but latterly they had been more forbearing ; “for,” as Fabian says in the old play, “he had at last turned out to be somebody, though as yet he hardly knew whom.”

And now Mrs. Errantdale began to “show the cold shoulder” towards her old acquaintance, for she had at last become intimate with somebody, whose husband was a knight, and who talked as familiarly of “Lady” this and “Sir” that, as common people do of “puppy-dogs,” and who moreover lived up a court in the neighbourhood of



ST. JAMES'S PALACE.



CHAPTER VII.

OF THE WONDERFUL CHANGE WHICH TAKES PLACE IN
JACK HARDY'S BUSINESS—WITH A GLANCE AT MARY
ROSE—AND HOW THE GARDENER WAS TAKEN ILL—
WITH WHAT JACK DID—WHICH WILL BE FOUND FULLY
RECORDED IN THE PRESENT CHAPTER.

A LIFE of labour brings its own reward—sound sleep,
good health, and a wholesome appetite; not but that
there are too many who work hard, and yet are scarcely
able to obtain the common necessities of life, to say
nothing of its comforts, and this is an evil difficult to

remedy, for "Man liveth not by bread alone." The fluctuations of trade—the over-stocking of our markets—the startling improvements in machinery—nay, even the very caprice of fashion, which one month gives employment to thousands of hands, and the next throws aside the produce as dead stock, are casualties which poor people are unprovided for, and for which a legislature must be gifted with great foresight to prevent. It is this very uncertainty which leaves some men rich and others poor—which causes one man to amass in a single week more than another can during a long and laborious life.

Our young friend Jack Hardy was one of those who drive a steady trade—who never speculate beyond their means—who "first creep, and then go," according to the wise old saying; and of such are they who almost invariably succeed. It was pleasant to watch the gradual improvement which took place in his mother's house; it was almost imperceptible; a person who went regularly in and out every day would scarcely have noticed it, it would only have struck an observer who had been absent for some length of time. The tin kettle was replaced by a copper one. "It would last so much the longer," Betty said, "and become cheaper in the end." An old broken chair had vanished to you knew not where, and in its place stood a good substantial second-hand one; "it was better than new," the old

woman said, "because it was well seasoned." A large table with its two bright leaves hanging down, and hardly seeming to take up any room, had somehow or other crept in and stood under the window, looking as if it had been there for years, and yet nobody ever remembered that side of the house being naked; for when Betty's washing-stool was not in use, it had always stood there covered with an old faded piece of green baize. That table had become necessary now, for sometimes Nanny the applewoman came to tea, and even the great market-gardener with his wife and daughter, had more than once visited them on a Sunday. The little corner-cupboard also presented a better array of cups and saucers; and there was a big-bellied teapot, that looked as if it had been made for a prize show at a Christmas tea-party. But above all, there hung in one corner of the house the long-talked-of bright brass warming-pan.

Jack had long since paid back honest Job the five pounds he had lent him, and could now, as he said, "begin to make his mother a bit more comfortable," for he considered himself quite rich. Nor did Job Errantdale ever lose sight of his little friend, but watched over him with a fatherly eye, suggesting many matters, which, as an old practised man of business, he knew better how to carry out, than one so young and inexperienced as Jack.

One afternoon as Job stood with the pipe in his mouth

at his garden-door, he seemed struck with the large baskets of peas, new potatoes, greens, &c., which projected a good way into the road from the front of Betty's house, and he said to her, "I have been thinking, Mrs. Hardy, if you were to take a larger house, and get into a greater thoroughfare, you might do twice as much business; that greengrocer's shop is shut up near the Elephant and Castle. Now I should advise you to take it."

Betty shook her head, dwelt upon her love for the old house in which she was born—said they were doing as well as they could be doing—spoke about the high state of rents in good situations, and then ended by saying that Mr. Rose the market-gardener had often persuaded Jack to take a shop.

"That shows he is a sensible man," replied Job, "and I am sure a wellwisher to your son, which indeed everybody is who knows him. Besides, you know Jack is growing up into a young man, and in a few more years he'll begin to think about getting married. You might perhaps let the upper part of the house, and then the shop will stand you in a mere trifle a year. I'll talk to Mr. Rose about it, inquire the rent and so on. If it does not answer in a year or two, the loss shall fall upon me. Jack need not lose one of his old customers. A good horse and cart, and he would go his rounds in a couple of hours or so; and you might have a boy to

assist you in the shop. It can and shall be done," added Job, as he shut the garden-door, and retired into the summer-house, to "weigh matters over in his own mind."

That night Jack and his dear old mother talked the matter over before they went to bed; and Betty said she should like him to try the shop, but was afraid, for she had, in the course of her life, seen so many people remove out of little houses into big ones who were compelled to go back into little ones again, that it quite made her afraid. Jack said Mr. Errantdale knew the best; and, if his mother would permit it, he would be guided by the opinions of the market-gardener and his friend Job.

Next morning the worthy coal-merchant went to the Borough Market and held a long consultation with Mr. Rose, the great gardener, the result of which was highly favourable to the interests of Jack; and it was decided between them that the market-gardener should spare one of his own men (the most trustworthy in his service, and one who had a thorough knowledge of the business), every day until noon, after which there was but little done, till such time as they found Jack was able to manage by himself. "More than this," continued Mr. Rose, "I will exchange what he may have left overnight for fresh articles the next morning; and the *plague* is in it if he can't do then, with the finest and

freshest stock in the neighbourhood. The loss to me will be but trifling, and he'll see what he can get through in a little time, for Jack's got a head set on his shoulders the right way, and may some day be rich enough to buy



THE COLOSSEUM."

With such encouragement, Job next went after the shop, and before the week was out he had taken it, "making Jack," as he said, "a present of the fixtures to start with, and hoping he would turn them to as good an account as he had done the donkey and cart."

Behold Jack, but now fifteen, yet with the knowledge and experience of a man, the proprietor of a large greengrocer's shop in the populous neighbourhood of the Elephant and Castle. See him standing at the front of his shed overlooking the delivery of a cart-load of potatoes, with a memorandum-book in his hand as he checks off the number of sacks. Look, with what alacrity he turns aside to serve the lady who has just come up—what a polite bow he makes as he tells her the goods shall be sent into West Square immediately. With what kind authority he calls upon his boy Tom to get his basket ready; and how he parts each lot, and writes on a slip of paper the name and address of each separate purchaser. And how kind it is of him, finding the load is too heavy for the little boy, to throw it on his own shoulder and deliver it himself. Jack! Jack! Why they call him young Mr. Hardy now. And the pretty servant-maids look so sly at him; and he has always something so pleasant to say, and is so respectful and attentive, calling them “Miss,” and “My dear,” that they wouldn't go anywhere else for the world. Jack might pick and choose amongst fifty now, if he wanted a little sweetheart. Nay, there are respectable ladies, with good-looking daughters, who are not ashamed of having a chat with the handsome greengrocer, nor of listening to Betty's tales, when his back is turned, as she tells them “what a good son he has been to her.” And

great shopkeepers send to him when they want change, same as merchants in the city do to



THE BANK,

for Jack is now never without a large yellow bag full of silver. And there is one, a beautiful maiden, with dark hair and dark eyes, and two rosy cheeks that look like the sunny side of a beautiful ripe peach, with a pair of lips red as the ripest cherries that ever hung in her father's garden. And she is always coming with some excuse or another, either to see if Jack wants any silver, or whether he has more of the choice apricots left, or

the basket of choice plums have gone off well. And should a customer or two come in, she never leaves, "just as if she had a right there," as the pretty servant girls say, "with her impudence;" and she calls Betty mother, and Betty calls her daughter, and kisses her every time she comes; and she cares no more about Jack, than she does for a straw; but if his neckerchief is untidy, tells him of it, and if his shirt-collar is down, pulls it up; and will insist upon Betty going in to warm her if she is cold; and thinks nothing of saying to a lady, "Pray ma'am, what can I serve you with?" And takes up anything to eat that she fancies; peaches twopence a-piece—and asks nobody's leave. That little dark-haired, black-eyed, rosy-cheeked, and cherry-lipped, girl is the great market-gardener's daughter; and when her father calls with his cart to take her home with him to Sydenham of an evening, sometimes the little puss won't go, but stays and sleeps with Betty all night, plays at draughts with Jack until ten or eleven o'clock: in a word, just does what she likes, and what is worse, nobody prevents her.

Happy stage of life! when the spirits, light as the burden of a bird in full song, knows neither pain nor care, but carolling all the live-long day, believes that the sunny world it is singing to is as bright and happy as it looks, and throbbing with the same joyous pulse that animates itself—such it was that brought laughter to

the lip, and brightness to the eye of Mary Rose, for love had not even entered her innocent thoughts ; the affections centred there as yet brought no blush to the cheek, nor no dimness to the eye, like a nectarine beautifully sheltered amid the greenery of its own leaves, and nursed by the summer unperceived, so had she bloomed into beauty unconsciously. Jack looked like a fine red handsome hard winter-apple ; she looked like

"A Katherine pear,
The side that's next the sun."

And should not the comparison be very clear, we must lay the blunder at the door of Sir John Suckling, who fought as well as wrote in the civil wars of England.

It was about this time when Mr. Rose was taken dangerously ill, and never did mortal exert himself more to restore his friend to health, and carry on the extensive gardening business, than did our worthy acquaintance, Jack Hardy. Jack had heard that a celebrated London physician visited one or two wealthy patients in the neighbourhood of Sydenham, and he resolved to waylay him, and have his advice, whatever it might cost ; and this he did without consulting any one. " Mr. Rose has acted like a kind father to me," said Jack, as he hovered about the large gate where the physician's carriage waited, " and were anything to happen to him I should never feel happy again."

Jack had put on his best suit, and his heart palpitated as he listened for the opening of the door, which would announce the return of the physician to his carriage, for he had never addressed so great a man before. At length he came, and, hat in hand, Jack approached, saying, "Pardon me for speaking to you, Sir, but I have a very dear friend so ill, that unless he has something done for him directly I am afraid he will never recover. I have brought a five-pound note, Sir," continued Jack, in a faltering voice, and holding it out in his hand as he spoke, "and if you will do your best for him I will pay you all you require, whilst I have a pound left in the world, for he has been like a father to me," and the tears trickled down his cheeks as he spoke.

The doctor took out his gold snuff-box, and after a couple of hearty pinches, and a hasty glance at his watch, said, "Where does your friend live, young man? and how long has he been ill?"

"He lives at the bottom of the road," answered Jack, "and has been ill above a week; and every day he gets worse instead of better. 'Tis Mr. Rose, the market gardener and florist, Sir; a man respected by everybody in the neighbourhood, and one of the best-hearted and kindest men that ever breathed."

"Oh, yes, a very worthy man!" replied the physician. "I have been over his flower-garden several times. Well, I will see what I can do for him." Then, speak-

ing to the servant, he said, "John, drive up to the cottage, at the bottom of the road; where I had the rose-tree from last year. I must defer my visit to Beckenham until to-morrow, for I must, to-night, be at



THE HOSPITAL.

Put your money in your pocket, young man," continued he, addressing Jack, who had again tendered him the five-pound-note; "we will talk about that when he has recovered," and he placed his foot on the carriage-step as he spoke.

"Please, Sir," said Jack, "I should like to run on first, to tell them you are coming, for they don't know that I have spoken to you. I have done so without naming a word about it to anybody but my mother."

"Very well, do so," answered the good-natured doctor. "John, go on with the carriage ; I shall walk."

Jack started off like a greyhound, and was in the house before the doctor had walked a third of the distance, and, in a few words, he communicated to Mrs. Rose what he had done.

"It is very kind, and very thoughtful of you, Jack," replied the worthy woman ; "but I wish you had told me before you went, that I might have put the parlour a little bit to rights. But the doctor will excuse that, for he must know that there's a great deal to do when there's sickness in a house."

"He is too much of a gentleman to notice anything that may be 'lying about,'" answered Jack ; "and I am sure if it had been ever so poor a place, instead of a nice comfortable cottage, as it is, he would have come just the same. He's a very different man to that Mr. Quackly, who talks pig-Greek and dog-Latin, and seldom cures anybody. But here the gentleman is."

While she spoke she kept removing a few loose articles which were lying about, and by such time as the physician arrived, everything was, what is called, "in apple-pie order."

The doctor held a brief consultation with her in the parlour, and then he proceeded up stairs, where he found his patient in a high fever, with the chamber-door closed,

the windows shut, and the blinds drawn; all these he ordered to be thrown wide-open at once.

"Mr. Quackley, Sir, said that he must not be exposed to the least draught of air," said Mrs. Rose, as she obeyed the doctor's orders.

"Mr. Quackley's manner of treating a patient is perhaps a little different to mine, madam," replied the doctor. "If we could remove him, bed and all, to the top of Sydenham Hill it would do him a great deal of good. Let him have all the air you can at present."

While he was speaking his hand was on the pulse of his patient; and when he had replaced the gold repeater in his pocket, he went up to the table, took up a bottle of medicine, smelt of it, held it to the light, shook it up, then smelt of it again, and, finally threw it out of the window; his patient, in the meantime, unconscious that any one stood beside him. Having taken another narrow survey of the invalid, placed his head on his chest, and watching his breathing for a minute, or more, he said:—

"There is nothing very dangerous at present, madam; and if you let him have plenty of fresh air, together with a little of the medicine I shall prescribe for him, he will be down stairs before another week. I am very glad indeed I looked in."

When he came into the parlour he wrote out his prescription, and despatched Jack with it to London at once; and before the doctor had departed Jack was making the

pebbles fly from under his horse's feet on the Camberwell Road, and was soon before the druggist's shop at the corner of



ST. PAUL'S.

The doctor went down stairs, and while he took a few turns in the flower-garden, begged of Mrs. Rose, if it were not too much trouble, to make him a cup of tea; and while this was in preparation the talented doctor amused himself by gathering the handsomest nosegay the garden could produce; indeed, he seemed to make himself quite at home.

Whilst the doctor sipped his tea, in the parlour, Mrs. Rose put together the nosegay he had collected, and,

with a few additions of her own, did it in such a style as few besides the wife of a gardener could have done.

The doctor made a few inquiries about Jack, for his simple and earnest manner had made a most favourable impression on him. Mrs. Rose recounted his whole history from the day Jack started with his barrow and basket up to the present time. The physician was so interested in Jack's history, that he troubled Mrs. Rose for a second cup of tea, and ate a plate of bread and butter, highly extolling her home-made bread, at which the worthy lady was not a little proud. As for her praise of Jack, it was unbounded. "And his conduct to day, sir," said she, "shows that he has a kind and feeling heart. And, God knows," added she, with tears in her eyes, "but for his seeing you, my poor dear husband might have died, kept up as he was there, without a breath of air—though he often begged of me to open the window."

"We'll bring him round, be assured," said the doctor, rising to depart; "it is not yet too late. Another day or two of such close confinement might have been dangerous. I shall find him better to-morrow, when I call."

The doctor had admired one or two very choice plants which were growing in flower-pots, and these he found placed in his carriage when he entered it, a compliment and an attention which was not lost upon him, for he drove off with a smile upon his countenance.

In very little more than two hours Jack had ridden to London and back, and got the prescription made up; and nothing would satisfy him but he must give the patient the first dose. He did so, and before sunset the invalid breathed more freely; the pure and fresh air of heaven was alone working wonders for him. Jack shed tears as Mr. Rose recognised him; he only spoke one word as, with a great effort, he moved his fevered hand an inch or two on the coverlet, and, returning the firm pressure of his youthful visiter, said, "Jack."

"You will soon be better now," returned he. "Dr. B—— has been to see you, and he says so. Don't you feel how refreshing this sweet air is in the room?"

The sick man smiled, and again pressed Jack's hand. He did feel it; every breeze was like a draught of pure water to the parched traveller in the desert.

What a strong contrast did the olive and sun-burnt countenance of the gardener form to the white pillow on which his head rested, looking like what we only once remember to have seen, and that was the face of a tropic-tanned mariner, as he lay drowned and half-buried amid the white surf on the wild sea-shore; and his hard, labour-browned hands, resting on the snowy coverlet, told how weak and powerless is health when it comes to grapple with disease in a close chamber. It was like Hercules prostrate with the plague—he whom no human arm could overthrow laying at the mercy of an invisible

enemy. There lay the broad manly chest, and the brawny limbs, which scarcely the hardest labour had ever been able to weary, almost motionless and helpless as a sleeping child; and Jack, as he gazed upon him, then turned to the window to conceal his emotion, looked over the many acres which he had brought into cultivation, and sighed as he thought what a change would soon come over the scene, unless the master-mind was again restored.

Mere babes in swaddling clothes are we all, when thrown into the arms of sickness; your greatest hero is an infant again, put out to nurse; your finest orator is struck dumb, or becomes an unmeaning driveller. And when death comes, there lies poor humanity.

“ His hands are folded on his breast;
There is no other sign express’d,
But long disquiet merged in rest.”

TENNYSON.

A wearisome and trying time it was for poor Jack Hardy, whilst his friend the gardener was confined to his sick bed. But Jack was endowed with that quiet perseverance and untiring patience which grows into energy as it becomes more familiar with difficulties. There were the work-people to look after in the garden-grounds, and so much attention had he paid to the conversation of Mr. Rose, that he was never at a loss to give them

proper directions as to what was most suitable for the market, and required to be first cut or gathered. Jack was too close an observer to need any instructions in these matters. And now he was compelled to ride to Sydenham after the business of the day was over, to see that all was in readiness for market next morning: and there he frequently slept, and was up by three or four o'clock, and in London by five or six, leaving what he himself needed for the day's consumption at his own shop as he passed; then hurrying off, and, with the help of the gardener's daughter, getting through the heavy bulk of the wholesale business by breakfast time. His own shop then required attending to until noon; after which, he would sometimes ride off to the garden-grounds, to see that all there was going on rightly—be home again by tea, and back to Sydenham by dark, driving Miss Rose, as she was now called, in the light cart; in fact, he was, as the gardener's wife said, "here, and there, and everywhere at once; and yet he never seemed tired, and nobody ever heard him complain." Then it was wonderful, considering the little education he had received, how accurately he kept his accounts; but Jack had spent hours in amusing himself on the slate where his mother put down the smaller items of her washing; and this, together with the few lessons he had received from Job Errantdale's coachman, enabled him to keep his books in a very "clerk-like"

manner. He received and paid all moneys, both in the extensive wholesale business of the gardener and his own, which increased every week; nor was there, at the expiration of a month—by which time Mr. Rose had so far recovered as to be able to look after things a little himself—a deficiency of a single shilling, although scores of pounds had passed through the hands of Hardy Jack; for it was a busy time, and in the very heart of summer.

The gardener began to recover from the day that the physician first attended him: and what his feelings were towards Jack, when he had become acquainted with everything, it is next to impossible to describe; one thing, however, he had fully resolved upon, and that was, in the course of a year or two, to make Jack a partner in the business; “for who,” said he to his wife, “will attend to it like him; and if anything should happen to me, I shall know that nothing can ever be wrong, and that those I leave behind will be acted justly unto, while there is such a head to manage, and such a hand to direct as Jack’s.”

The physician ordered Mr. Rose to pass a few weeks by the sea-side, until his strength was thoroughly established; and such was his confidence in Jack, from the masterly manner in which he had conducted everything during his illness, that he went away as unconcerned as if he had no business to manage, or nothing in the world

to look after, saving himself. He was also accompanied by his wife; "for," as she said, "when Jack and Mary set about matters, you and I only seem in the way." But Mr. Rose's foreman was a steady and attentive man, and a well-experienced gardener, so that the practical details, which Jack could not as yet thoroughly understand, were well attended to.

Then Jack and the gardener's daughter must come down to Margate once, whilst Mr. and Mrs. Rose were staying there; and a long letter was sent, stating what time the last boat left



LONDON BRIDGE,

and how Monday was not a market-day, and that if they were back by Monday night it would be soon enough;

and a deal of talk, and much preparation was there during the week, between Jack and Mary, about their intended excursion. One thing only seemed to make Jack uneasy, and that was a determination on the part of his mother not to accompany them.

"I never was on the salt sea but once," said Betty, "and that was before you were born, Jack, and then I was deadly sick; and, please the Lord, I'll never go again. A voyage to Greenwich or Richmond is the furthest you'll ever catch me going by water."

Many were the questions put by pretty Mary to Jack, in the course of that week. "Was it true some parts of the sea had no bottom?" "Should they be out of sight of land?" "Did he think she would be sea-sick?" "If she fell overboard, would he jump in to save her?" with many other questions, which Jack was not able to answer.

At length Saturday came, and a beautiful, calm day it was as ever summer sun shone upon; and what was more pleasing to the young people, matters had been so arranged, through the kindness of another market-gardener, an old friend of Mr. Rose's, that they were enabled to leave London by the ten-o'clock boat, so that by afternoon they were on the "open sea." Mary was delighted; Jack was filled with something like awe, when he looked around and saw "only a world of water;" nay, he was wicked enough to wish it would blow a good

stiff breeze, just that he might have some notion of what being out in a gale of wind was. Still, he was glad it was so calm, since Mary was with him, who, even then, could scarcely manage to walk the deck of the vessel by herself.

But the stormy old sea-king was asleep—he neither sent out a yawn nor a roar from the depths of his hidden caverns; the waves seemed only to chase one another like children at play, the wind sang not to the surrounding cliffs—not a billow sought to overleap “the pale-faced shore.”

“The air was calm, and on the level brine
Sleek Panope with all her sisters play’d.”

MILTON.

Not that we ever saw the latter-named lady playing with her sisters on the ocean—excepting in our imagination, and a very pretty vision it was. But still our youthful voyagers saw plenty to amuse them; large ships went by with all their sails set, and here and there the sea was dotted with little fishing boats. Mary wondered how they would ever find their way home again, and how the captain could tell where Margate was, when there was nothing to be seen but sky and water. But Margate hove in sight at last: first, its church-steeple appeared; then something like houses were seen; at length, the town and the cliffs were clearly visible; then came

the long pier, and oh! more cheering than all, Mary recognised her father and mother, and in a few more minutes was enfolded in their arms. Jack and the honest gardener shook hands; not a cold, brief, formal shaking, but one which made the very fingers tingle again; and when Mrs. Rose kissed him, Jack actually blushed, for so many people were looking on. But tea was waiting. Oh! such shrimps, and such a lobster for supper, and such a lovely walk on the cliffs, and on the sands in the morning! Who so happy as Jack Hardy and Mary Rose?





CHAPTER VIII.

CONCERNING THE FURTHER CAREER OF AUGUSTUS ERRANTDALE, AND HOW HE BECAME A WEST-END DANDY—WITH A FEW WORDS ON “WINE AND SUPPER ROOMS”—AND THE ADVANTAGES HE DERIVED THROUGH BECOMING ACQUAINTED WITH A YOUNG LADY AND GENTLEMAN WHO HAD SEEN THE WORLD.

It will be readily imagined that among the many companions which Augustus Errantdale had already found, there were a few, who, like himself, had the most extended views of morality; and as he was supplied most liberally with pocket-money by his fond but foolish

mother, no marvel that he was soon looked up to as a kind of leader among his poorer acquaintances. School, of course, was never again thought of; and now he became a little west-end "fop"—a kind of dandy on a small scale—and was already as particular in giving his orders to his tailor, as if he had been born an aristocrat. Bred and brought up to treat with contempt the hewers of wood and the drawers of water, and looking upon them as a class made of inferior clay, and not to be named beside idle and white-handed gentility,—he became one of those idle gentlemanly boys who ape the do-no-work men—a sort of clean indolent class, well known in the gambling houses, billiard-rooms, and card-tables of the west-end. He carried a neat little cane with a silver top to it; said "Ah! ah!" and "How are you?" to every brother puppy he met; strapped his trowsers down very tight, and wore a pin in his stock which reminded you of a poker in miniature; wore his surtout so tight that it seemed actually glued upon his back, and had his shirt-collar stiffened to a nicety; sometimes, too, he carried a small riding-whip and wore spurs, although he had long since parted with his pony, and quarrelled with honest Job because he refused to buy him a real blood-horse; nor could he now resist comparing his watch with almost every clock he passed, as if, because he had nothing to do, time was to him of the greatest consequence. He also became a great

patron of pastry-cooks' and confectioners' shops ; sat down in a chair with all the consequence of an earl and twice his pride ; swallowed his jelly, munched his tart, and chatted with the small lady behind the counter ; the little would-be woman made to match the small would-be man, who is taught to be polite and condescending and agreeable—to smile at every unmeaning sentence—to look pleased and delighted with every customer—to wrap up her halfpence very neatly, and tender such a nod of recognition as leaves you in doubt whether it is to you or the ginger-beer fountain which stands opposite.

To have appreciated the intellect of the young dandy properly, you should have seen him turn to the mirror before he quitted the shop, give his lanky hair a twist, and endeavour in vain to coax it into a curl ; pull up the collar of his shirt, and adjust his breast-pin ; give his little surtout a pull down on each side, so that it might sit without a wrinkle upon his bony back and protruding shoulders ; then draw out his handkerchief an inch or two from his side-pocket, in order that it might be visible ; and, after uttering his "bye-bye," he would stalk out, twirling his cane or riding-stick—the veritable prince of puppies. And so he would march forth, thinking, as the cockney-boys were wont to say when he passed, "no small beer of himself," to give his heels an airing in the colonnade of the



ITALIAN OPERA.

Such was his first progress towards becoming a “man about town;” for, as to the theatres, he had long before this paid them a visit. Smoking he had many a time attempted, but had hitherto only succeeded so far as to make himself ill; but sickness, to what he considered so manly an accomplishment, was a trifling matter, which must be endured; so he persevered, whiffing away while he could stand it, and, when beaten, invariably throwing the remainder of the cigar into the street; for what was fourpence to a young gentleman like him. Nor must we omit to mention the gilt eye-glass that he occasionally carried, which, as his dear mother re-

marked, "added so much to his respectability;" and she often said, in the pride of her heart, that there never was a more gentlemanly young man than her "dear Augustus;" and so said several other ladies with whom she was acquainted, especially in her own presence, although, behind her back, such epithets as "ignorant," "proud," "conceited," "ass," "puppy," and a score other similar endearing appellations were invariably added by them to lengthen out his list of accomplishments. Not that it prevented them a jot the less from partaking of the many good things which the lady provided, for they thought that a little flattery was the least price they could pay for such entertainments.

About this time he was also taught dancing, and after having received a few lessons, he became bold enough to venture into those vile assembly rooms which abound in the neighbourhood of almost every theatre, and are frequented by such characters, of both sexes, as we will not here give a name to. And now Master Errantdale began to make great progress; he was enabled soon to master a glass or two of weak sherry negus, and pick up the second-hand sayings of the most noted amongst these characters, which he again retailed to his own select companions, to their no small wonderment, as they admitted the superiority of his wit, and said they should not be astonished if he one day came out in the



HOUSE OF PARLIAMENT.

Nor will our readers be surprised when told that he here picked up some very queer acquaintance—for such places as these are the hot-beds in which the seeds of vice are sown—nurseries of Newgate—great garden-grounds to the gallows. A notorious gambling-house may be soon suppressed, but these infamous “wine and supper rooms” stand with their gaping doors open all night long, and alluring by every vicious inducement the too-willing and very often unsuspecting youth into the richly gilded and painted walls—true emblems of the destruction and ruin which their decorations conceal. Justice winks at them; and it is not until their crimes are fully ripened that she rubs her eyes and looks on, as if marvelling how such things can be.

From the first night of entering these corrupt abodes, may the ruin of many a youth be dated—the first entry into that great catalogue of crime which, if unchecked in its early career, will in the end swell out into a bulky and heinous volume. Such infamous places stand like plague spots upon the land—a blot and a disgrace to a Christian country. Better, a thousand times better, would it be if our legislature studied *more* to prevent crime, and *less* to punish it—if, instead of proposing plans for new prisons, they rased to the earth these base places from which our jails are peopled. While such spots exist,



THE MILLBANK PENITENTIARY

will never be emptied of its ill-starred and unfortunate

victims ; for, as one generation passes away, another will be ready reared for its reception.

No reflective man can walk through London at midnight without noticing the number of these houses, which are licensed—solemn mockery!—according to some old act of Parliament ; and that there may be no doubt about the matter, the sentence referring to the above-named act is generally emblazoned along with the royal-arms above the door. Here, about midnight, when all respectable houses are closed, dancing, drinking, and smoking commences, and the sound of music is heard until the sun has climbed high above the horizon. 'Tis true, a policeman or two occasionally peep in, but so long as there is neither a cry of robbery nor murder, it is not their business to interfere. It is not until a future day that their work commences, when the dissipated nightly attendant has become a marked man, and whispers are abroad that the money he spends is obtained dishonourably. Then it is that these guardians keep their eyes upon him ; and, when the hour comes, which come it must, they are ready to swear that they have long known him as a constant visiter to these abodes of vice ; which, had their masters done their duty long before, would ere this have been swept away from the ground which they both disgrace and encumber : for they have yet to learn the great lesson that, to commence the work of reform thoroughly, they must

study more to *prevent* crime than to *punish* it. It is an old axiom, but cannot be too often repeated. Better thus, than to hurry away victim after victim; to close the eyes upon those nurseries which are erected for the growth of crime, until the fruit is ripe and ready to be seized, shipped off, and exported to some far-off land of felons, whose very names are forgotten amid the new race that step in and fill up the room they have left vacant. For it is an awful fact that, where one place of rational and social instruction is opened, two or three of these infamous dens are licensed to carry on their midnight revelries.

It will not be wondered at that, with such temptations as these, Master Errantdale got on rapidly; that he found professors and tutors in almost every class of crime, and amongst these became acquainted with a female about his own age, the daughter of a fond mother, ruined by over-indulgence. A more beautiful face than Eliza Fowling's, human eye hath rarely dwelt upon; but, although so young, these midnight hours had preyed on the roses which once adorned her cheeks; and she had recourse to rouge, when late revels had blotted out the bloom which nature's own hand had hung upon her cheeks. Her eyes, when lighted up by some forced expression, had all the appearance of innocence and love, though real tenderness and admiration lent not their aid to this piercing and unnatural brightness.

Her hair was dark and wavy, and sunk in silky ridges across her beautifully formed forehead, but showing an inclination to curl every way, in spite of the warfare of oil and brushes: while her lips retained their soft and natural expression, gracing a chin of the prettiest form. Still, over all this outward beauty, there hung a something that seemed out of keeping; it was the mark of vice. She had been taught dancing, and had but few equals in that art; but her excellence only led to many invitations, many parties, and many partners, where evening sunk into midnight, and morning at last appeared before she arrived at home. Great at first were her mother's troubles, but these time soon wore away; her daughter was naturally of a gay disposition, and there was no help for it; so she consoled herself with the thought that, as she grew older, she would grow steadier, for as yet she had scarcely numbered sixteen summers. She was mistress of her own actions; carried the latch-key about in her little silk bag, and went home whenever she pleased. A cab was but one fare for her and Augustus Errantdale, and he frequently set the young dancer down at her own door before he was driven home to Kennington. After a time, when the evening was very fine, he walked home with her, sometimes went in, and was always a welcome visitor; and so far had he ingratiated himself with her mother, that the good lady one evening accompanied them to



DRURY-LANE THEATRE.

That evening he ordered a cold roast-fowl and its accompaniment of ham, together with a bottle or two of wine to be sent in from an hotel which he frequently visited; and after supper he stayed until nearly daylight, the girl's mother leaving them to sit up as long as they pleased, instead of teaching them the evil consequences which too often arise from such late hours. From this time his recreations were no longer limited to the compass they had hitherto been confined in. He now took a larger sweep, though he was scarcely yet bold enough to show the unblushing part of a practised libertine; his vices became more fashionable, for sorry we are to say that there is even a fashion in vice, and

that many parents, instead of checking it, exclaim, like Mrs. Errantdale, "I should not like to see my son different to other young gentleman who are born to a fortune. Let them enjoy themselves in their own way."

What more was required in his mother's eyes—he could do no wrong if he but followed the example of other respectable youths of his acquaintance; and amongst them was a youth who was nearly two years older than young Errantdale, and who had made the voyage to India and back as a midshipman; he was also a friend of the fair Eliza's, but had given her up to young Errantdale. This young gentleman was an especial favourite at Dale House; and he taught Augustus to smoke cigars and drink brandy-and-water in a very little time. He had made but one voyage, and was never likely to make another, for his elder brother had died whilst he was at sea, and being, as most scapegraces are, the mother's favourite, she had resolved never to part with him again. The feelings of Mrs. Hutton and Mrs. Errantdale were very similar, so they of course soon became intimate friends. Charles Hutton was a high-spirited youth, possessing all that rough courage and fearless daring which, when reduced to something like order by the discipline of the navy, has often produced those bold commanders whose prowess on the "great deep" have caused the flag of England to be revered in the remotest corners of the globe. One

thing which he prided himself upon, was doing whatever he said he would do; and this often caused his companions to say, "Charley, you daren't do so and so." If he said he dare, he would do it at once, let whatever might be the consequence. Whether he did such things for the love of mischief, or to show that he cared for nothing, or to gain an ascendancy over his companions, he perhaps scarcely knew himself, any more than those valorous knights of old, who, according to Froissart, were wont to make the most ridiculous vows, and lose their lives in attempting to fulfil them, which were sometimes as impossible as it would be for a man to jump off the monument without breaking his bones.

Thus, if an apple-stall were to be thrown over, a barrel rolled into a cellar, a milk-can upset, a knocker wrenched off, or a bell rung, either Charles or Augustus was the gentleman to do it; for the latter thought it quite a "feather in his cap" to be as daring as the young midshipman. If they could get off by running away, they did; if they were captured, it was seldom for long, as the money for paying the trifling fine which the magistrate inflicted was never long forthcoming; and very often they arranged with the aggrieved party upon the spot. Their parents consoled themselves with the thought, "that as they got older they would grow wiser, when they had once sown their wild oats."

There is perhaps no place in the world where youth

so soon assume the habits of men as in London; many of course copying examples that are good, others following only those which are evil. It would astonish a stranger to enter a few of the taverns and eating-houses in the city, and to see the mere boys who come in by themselves, give their orders to the waiter, approach the fire to warm their hands, and take up the paper with all the ease imaginable. True, their parents live at some distance, too far to allow of their going home to dinner, and almost making this custom a necessity; nevertheless, it emboldens youth, uprooting all that modesty and diffidence which are so becoming in young people; rendering them familiar with almost all grades of society at too early an age, and filling them with ideas that they are in every way equal to those with whom they then mingle. Some of these impertinent puppies we have heard address old grey-headed waiters in such an unbecoming manner, that our hands have fairly itched again to box their ears. Others have come in, and given their order as if they were asking for a great favour, and thanking the waiter for every little attention he paid to them. And such as these have always been treated with a fatherly respect by their elders who sat at the same table, and who rarely failed to hand them whatever they might want without being asked to do so.

In some of the west-end fashionable eating-houses, scenes like these may be witnessed, which are truly dis-

gusting, and where youths of fifteen and sixteen will call for their pint of wine, and discuss its qualities as if they were connoisseurs of some standing. Amongst these stood first and foremost Augustus Errantdale and his companion. The air with which that young gentleman would take up the "bill of fare," enumerate each article, then throw it down, not finding anything therein to suit his palate, might have become a marquis; while his directions to dress some particular dish, accompanied by a few comments from the midshipman, would have caused a stranger to conclude that they had been familiar with Ude from their cradles. The waiters of course were all submission and attention, for who feed them like these youths of fashion and fortune? and to prove their gratitude, if there was anything in the house of an inferior quality, it was invariably dressed and brought to their table, for the servants well knew from experience, that however good it might be, they were sure to find fault; and they thought it but justice, whenever they could, not to let the young gentlemen do so without occasion.

Then "Middy," as his companions familiarly called him, was such "capital company," had so many anecdotes to tell, and had met with such remarkable adventures, both in his way to and whilst in India, that if you believed all he said, neither Sinbad the Sailor nor Baron Munchausen were to be mentioned in the same

breath with him. He told more falsehoods than would have filled a good-sized volume; had, according to his account, hooked more sharks, and hunted more tigers than very many who had spent a long life-time in the same climate; had seen krakens large as an island: and sea-snakes, miles long, he had, he said, seen scores of times; and, as to a mermaid, he could show the very comb he took from one, if he liked, and could remember a verse of the song she was singing. He had ridden like Arion on a dolphin's back, and fine fun he said it was: had fallen overboard and swum we forget how many miles, after a ship; but, like "Falstaff's men in buckram," every account varied. Then the gales he had been in—waves rolling miles high; the number of times he was shipwrecked; one night on a rock—another on a wreck—so many days out at sea in an open boat—how they had no food—cast lots—ate the cook, then the cabin boy, with such a tissue of lies, partly invented, and partly taken from his readings in various books, that you would almost imagine he had commenced with the Arabian Nights and ended with Baron Munchausen.

Such was the most intimate friend of Augustus Errantdale, above two years his senior—much more intimate with the ins and outs of the world—reckless of everything, so far as regarded character, and believing that the only things worth living for were fun, mischief, and pleasure. Wild and bad as he was in too many

things, he had still a nobler heart than Augustus : he assumed no virtue "which he had not," concealed nothing that inspired or angered him ; if he quarrelled, he bore no malice ; if he was in fault, he was the first to own it ; and if in a "row," he was the foremost to lead on and the last to retreat.

Theatres, saloons, billiard-rooms, oyster-shops, and cigar-divans he was as familiar with as a "regular man about town." He seemed to know everybody, and everybody to know him ; and numberless were the young gentlemen to whom he introduced Augustus, and who like him had caused their parents many an heart-ach ; for nothing can be worse than to bring a youth up with an idea that he is never expected to do anything—that all he has to learn is to fit himself for the society of such as himself—that he was born to take his pleasure, and that the chief thing he had to study was to kill time as agreeably as he could. Without either object or aim, and often at a loss in the morning to know how the time will be spent until night, no marvel that the first temptation which presents itself is accepted, and that Vice, who "lies in wait at the corner of every street," is oftener met with than Virtue.



CHAPTER IX.

HOW JACK HARDY PROGRESSED BOTH IN BUSINESS AND COURTSHIP—WHAT PLANS HE AND MARY ROSE LAID DOWN FOR HOUSEKEEPING—TOGETHER WITH HOW THEY FELL OUT AND THEN FELL IN AGAIN—THE CHANGE THAT TOOK PLACE IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE MARKET-GARDENER, AND HOW HE TALKED ABOUT RETIRING—WITH BETTY HARDY'S GOSSIP ABOUT OLD TIMES—WHICH BRINGS THE READER TO THE END OF THE CHAPTER.

SUMMER, autumn, and winter passed away; the visit to the sea-side had thoroughly reinstated the health of the

market-gardener, and all things went on prosperously with Jack Hardy ; for scarcely a greengrocer, on the Surrey side of the water, had so extensive a retail business. As for Betty, she had improved so far as to wear, on a Sunday, a silk gown, and Jack said she looked quite a lady in it. And Mary Rose was now as constant in her attendance at the shop as ever, and the customers began to call her "the young missis." at which, she, at first, began to titter and blush, and, at last, she thought nothing about it ; for, if a customer wanted change, Jack would say, pointing to her, "my young missis there will give it you ;" and if any one wanted to speak with Jack about business, her unvarying answer was, "you must talk to our Jack," or, "see what our young master says about it ;" in a word, without talking at all about the matter, they somehow understood that one day or another they were to be married, because everybody said so ; and, as Betty remarked, "what everybody said must come true at last." As for their courtship, it consisted in a series of arguments, whether Jack should go to live with Mary, at the cottage at Sydenham, or she should come and live with Jack, at his shop. Happy pair ! whose only dispute was about the changing of their homes ; nor could Mary ever see the difficulty which should prevent them all living together. All Mary talked or thought about was, when they were married, they should have so many things of their own ;

and she never walked out with Jack, but what she was continually drawing his attention to some set of china she would like, or the particular pattern of some chair that she should fancy—and these she would have a set of, for the best parlour—and that chest of drawers she would have for the up-stairs room, and every day she was wanting to run in to buy some great carpet, with a staring pattern upon it; for she said it looked just like the flower-beds in her father's garden at Sydenham, and she was afraid, it was so handsome, if they did not have it at once it would be gone. And when she got up at night and talked over all she had seen, and what they intended to have, Mrs. Rose would lift up her hands in astonishment, and exclaim, "God bless the girl! wherever does she mean to put them all? Why the house is so full now, we are compelled to turn one chair on the top of another, to make room; and, as for tables, we can hardly move about for tumbling over them; and I'm sure the house 'll be big enough for Jack and Betty, and you, and all of us; and as to where he lives now, he must let the upper part, and come and live here, and go to his business in the morning and come home at night, same as a many gentlemen do in the city, ah! and that have their thousands too!" And Mr. Rose—worthy man! who loved Jack as dearly as he did his own daughter—talked of buying a neat gig, and a bit better sort of horse, just for Jack and Mary to drive to town

and back again in, instead of going with the heavy-laden carts; showing how they could run over easily within the hour, and that, as but little business was done in the after part of the day, how readily they might get some sober, steady, and honest man to attend to his shop—his own foreman, for instance—and that, saving on Saturday nights, Jack and Mary might always be home in time for tea; and as to Betty herself, they could see but little use in her being dragged backwards and forwards, excepting on a fine day, now and then, just for a little change, so she might stay and chat with Mrs. Rose, or saunter about the garden, or sit, on a sunshiny day, in the summer-house; and, as he would sometimes say, while smoking his pipe, “see that little Jack and Poll didn’t pull up the flowers while they played.” And when the three old people were alone, Mr. and Mrs. Rose and Betty, what long conversations they would hold together! Betty could not think of leading such a lady’s life as that; no, that she couldn’t—so used as she had been to working hard all her born days; why, she did next to nothing then, and however could she spend her time, when she came to do less, she couldn’t tell. Then Mr. Rose would argue that it didn’t matter much whether they ever did anything at all, for he had had so many thousands offered for such a number of acres of an immense garden-ground, that the interest of the money would pay him almost as well to sell his freehold to

build upon, as it would to cultivate it ; and if the cottage wasn't large enough for them all, why he would add to it until it was as big as



SOMERSET HOUSE.

But I must tell you what a serious tiff Jack and Mary had one day, all because Jack gave a young lady, who lived in West-square, a handful of flowers, which Mary saw Jack give to her ; and beheld the young lady smiling at something Jack said, and tap him on the cheek with the flowers, before she went away. Mary didn't care about it, no, that she didn't ; there was nothing the matter with her—nothing at all ; she didn't speak, because she didn't want to speak—she wasn't crying

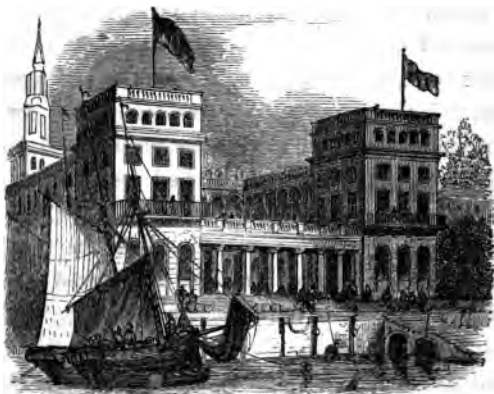
about anything, that she wasn't ; she had nothing to cry about—she didn't want any tea-making, she never was better in her life ; there was nothing amiss with her—kiss her ! no, that he shouldn't—jealous ! not she ; she thought a good deal better of herself—he might kiss them he talked to, and smiled to, and gave flowers to—customers, indeed ! he wasn't forced to take hold of every customer's hand that came, and look them in their faces, and say “bye-bye,” and wish them pleasant dreams—not that she cared ; it was nothing to her—Farmer Simpson's son, of Sydenham, had promised to take her to



THE BRITISH MUSEUM,

and she would go, that she would—and he might take the lady out of West-square, and give her flowers, and do as he liked, for what she cared. Then she sat down and had a good cry: while Betty “blessed her heart,” and threatened to box Jack’s ears if ever he talked to any of the “nasty husseys” again. And poor Jack, who hadn’t an evil thought in his head, and would sooner have endured anything than have caused Mary Rose a moment’s pain, was so wretched he did not know what he was doing; but, while serving his customers, shoved into the scale a four-pound weight instead of a two-pound, mistook peck measures for half-pecks; and was only at last brought to his senses, by one old woman going in and saying to Betty, “I think your son’s demented to-day, for he’s given me onions when I asked for turnips, and instead of three pounds of potatoes, he tied me up three great cabbages; he’s either mad, Betty, or else he’s in love, depend upon it.” This was too much for the kind-hearted Mary; she arose from her seat, placed her hand on Jack’s arm, looked into his face, and said, “I didn’t mean to go to the Museum with him, that I didn’t Jack—but I can’t bear to see you speak kindly and be friendly with any girl but me; I know it’s very silly, and very selfish of me to say so, but it’s caused me to have many a cry to myself, Jack; and if I’ve tried to help it I couldn’t—but I’ll never do so again, and you’ll never give me cause, will you, Jack?” Of course he

readily answered, "No;" and so the tiff was made up. But from that moment a new light broke across Jack's mind ; he placed himself in her position, asked himself how he should like to see any young fellow smile, and talk, and pat her cheek with flowers ; and he soon perceived that, without intending it, he had done wrong, and resolved to be more guarded in future, even if he lost a customer or two through it. In the afternoon, to make matters up, as Jack had to go to Covent Garden about some business, he proposed that they should take the steam-boat at



HUNGERFORD MARKET,

and ride down as far as Greenwich and back. They did so, and much were they amused with the beauty of the park, the old pensioners, the groups of children playing

at the foot of the Observatory, the beautiful view they had of the river from One-Tree Hill, and, above all, the glorious ride they had on two donkeys, at Blackheath. They had a peep at the old Elizabethan house, and then a cup of tea at the "Golden Anchor," beside the river. They never had been happier together before in their lives; and Mary, from the innocence of her heart, said, "Oh, Jack, I'll never be angry with you any more, talk to whoever you may!" and Jack answered, that if he talked to fifty he cared for her only.

And now a great change was about to take place in Mr. Rose's circumstances, for he had had five thousand pounds offered him for the freehold of his nursery-ground to build upon, its value consisting in its being so near to the neighbourhood of the new railroad. He had, also, had a great number of acres of land offered to him at a very low price, which were lower down the road, and in a direct line with his own house; but not considered, as a building-site, to be a tenth of the value of the grounds which he had for years cultivated. "I think, Jack," said the gardener, "I shall close with both offers—sell the old, and buy the new—and with only the loss of a few fruit-trees, and a year or two's hard work to bring the land into cultivation, I shall be enabled to put three thousand pounds into the Bank; and that, you know, Jack, together with what I have, will be something against a rainy day. The new land I intend to purchase

for you and Mary, Jack; as for us, thank God, we have got enough to live upon; and you must work at the new land, and bring it into "good heart," as my father and I have done at the old land for these last fifty years; and, with the blessing of God, and what I can do for you besides, I've no doubt but that you'll prosper. I hope to see you married in the course of a year or two, Jack; that once over, and the land in good cultivation, I shall take to my old arm-chair in the chimney corner; and, save advising you now and then, and putting my hand in my pocket occasionally when you need it, I shall leave you to do your best."

Pleasant was the evening which Jack and his little sweetheart spent in that summer-house, talking about the bright prospects which the future seemed to open before them, and planning in their own minds how they should act. And when Mr. Rose came to join them, and to smoke his evening pipe, he was astonished at the clear view which Jack took of things; how he proposed to raise higher one portion of the new land, and to lower another, and, above all, the knowledge he possessed of the different manures which were best adapted for the various methods of cultivation; and great was his delight to find that Jack had long been taking in a monthly work on gardening, and had already made himself master of its contents: "for," as the honest gardener said to his wife that evening, "he already knows more than I

do about many things, although I have been forty years in business. Jack stayed all night at the cottage, as he had many a time before done, and next morning early he drove Mary over to London in the light cart, in time enough for business. Jack had long been a rate-payer, and now began to take a part in the business of the parish. Old men came and talked to him about alterations, and rates, and vestry-meetings, and charitable institutions, just as if he understood such matters as well as themselves; and Jack was so good a listener, and so respectful in his behaviour, that they said it was quite a pleasure to talk to such a sensible young man, and that some day or another, when he got to be a little older, he would turn out to be somebody. As to Betty, she was a favourite with everybody; she knew so much about the neighbourhood before it was altered, when there were fields here, and no houses there; when the Fishmongers' Almshouses stood in the country, and the Dog-and-Duck, and the Asylum, and Newington Church, and a few old wooden houses, were almost all the buildings you met with until you came to the village of Kennington. Then she had such a deal to say about the old style of dress, high shoes, and pig-tails, and cocked-hats, and gentlemen who wore laced ruffles, and frilled shirts that stuck out at the fronts of their waistcoats like a peacock's tail; and many of the old inhabitants used to gather about Betty for the love of her ancient gossip;

and amongst the number was old Job Errantdale, who had never ceased for a moment to take a deep interest in the affairs of Jack, and often expressed his regret that he was not blessed with such a son ; and then Job would add with a sigh, " But 'tis all his mother's fault, Mrs. Hardy,—all her own fault."

Now Betty was one of those women, who, if she could not give a person a good word, made a point of never giving them a bad one ; and the only time we can recal, in which she seemed to lose her temper, was when she lost her washing, and did think it hard that the great laundresses should run away with everything, and scarcely leave a poor washerwoman the means of making "ends meet and tie;" so, in answer to Job, she used to say "that, no doubt Mrs. Errantdale did it all for the best, and that it was very natural, having the means they had, that she should indulge Master Augustus in whatever he wanted. I am sure I should have done the same with my Jack, if it had lain in my power, but you know it never did, Mr. Errantdale. When I was first left with him, I'd enough to do, I can assure you—early and late, late and early, did I struggle for him, often until one or two o'clock in the morning, so that when I got into bed, I could scarcely sleep, my bones ached so, and I hadn't a soul to do a hand's-turn for me, Mr. Errantdale, till I knew you when you ; were kind enough to notice my little Jack, and Mrs. Errantdale was kind

enough to give him now and then a cast-off thing of Master Augustus's; and I shall always think kindly of her for that. And, as for Jack, bless you, if I were to let him have his own way, he would never allow me to put my hand to anything, nor do a stroke of work of any sort; but, as I often tell him, I must poke about something or another, if it only be mischief; for I have been a stirring woman, all my life, Mr. Errantdale."

And Job used to go away, thinking in his own mind of the difference there was between Jack Hardy and his son Augustus, and often wishing to himself that he had spent his Christmas in his own counting-house eighteen years before, or in smoking his pipe in the comfortable old parlour which for years he had frequented, or anywhere but where he did, when he first met Miss Arabella Allshaw, with her—and then Job invariably whistled, to drive away the harsh thoughts which he had so great a difficulty to keep down, whenever he recalled the years of misery he had passed in wedlock, and all the sayings and doings of his lawful wife. For, as he often said, the only comfort that had ever sprung from his marriage was, the acquaintance he had made with Betty Hardy, and the consolation of knowing that he had been instrumental in assisting her worthy son Jack.



CHAPTER X.

IN WHICH WE DISCOURSE FURTHER ABOUT THE CAREER OF AUGUSTUS ERRANTDALE—SHOWING HOW HE EXCELLED IN BILLIARDS, CARDS, AND DICING—THE READY WAY HE FOUND OF RAISING MONEY, WHEN HIS FUNDS WERE LOW—HOW HE REFORMED, WENT HOME, AND IMPROVED HIMSELF IN PENMANSHIP—TOGETHER WITH THE USE HE MADE OF THIS NEW ACQUIREMENT.

AND now Augustus Errantdale began to cultivate moustaches; to let his hair grow to a great length behind;

to carry a stick too short for walking, with the handle up to his mouth so as to nibble off the varnish; to smoke a meerschaum-pipe openly in the street at noon-day; and vote everything vulgar which had not a foreign and Frenchified look about it. He was well known at those little threepenny concerts, which are now so common in what were once good homely old-fashioned hotels, and where a little indifferent painting, and a wretched accompaniment of music, together with such singing as is only varied by its extra loudness from the common "street-squall," make up the evening's amusement. Here he was, indeed, what he himself termed it, "a great card." He was also well known in every billiard-room at the West-end, and in every cigar-divan from Charing-cross to Chelsea. He prided himself on the manner in which he could hold his cue, and make cannons, and pocket the red ball whenever he pleased. He knew every marker in the billiard-rooms by their Christian names, and was quite a crack hand at the game of pool. Nor was he less expert at card-playing—he could turn up a Jack whenever he chose, and shuffle the four aces together in the pack, to the astonishment of every one, saving a few choice gamblers, black-legs, and cheats. He was well initiated into the mystery of loaded dice; and the sworn companion of every professed gambler in the low West-end gaming houses, and was well known amongst that class of mye-

terious-looking young gentlemen who frequent the neighbourhood of



THE DUKE OF YORK'S COLUMN,

and attend the drill almost as regular as the soldiers themselves.

Down these descending steps of vice he was, of course attended by his bosom-friend the "Middy," who, however, went no further than what he called a "little cheating amongst cheats." Whenever good luck, as they were wont to term it, smiled upon their fortunes at the gambling-table, it was generally followed up by some pleasure-trip to Greenwich, or Gravesend, or Richmond, in which they were accompanied by Miss Fowling, and another friend of hers, equally as frail and fair, who

called the young midshipman her "Charley;" and in these places they amused themselves by frequenting bazaars, and were ever ready to make up the given number who win those useless and trumpery prizes in the "wheel of fortune." As for ordering a white-bait-and-champagne dinner at Blackwall, they thought no more of such an occurrence than a dozen cabinet ministers do of meeting together at the same place after the labours of the session have closed, Lest the females I am describing should be mistaken, I must tell my young readers that they belong to that peculiar class, who are distinguished by wearing white boots, dresses made very low in the front, and generally cut, but for this difference, in the newest fashion, and made of the gaudiest materials; who also decorate themselves with a profusion of glass beads, which they wear around their necks, as real ladies do gold chains, and who, rather than go out without a veil, would take down the coarse muslin window-blind, and throw it over their heads; whose bonnets and fronts are always profusely laden with staring handfuls of cotton flowers, which look as if they had been kept for a month in pots, and after having laid a week in the ash-bin, were picked up, stitched in, and worn for ornaments. Such are ever seen at night in the neighbourhood of theatres, or gaming-houses, or walking about at the front of hotels; parading up and down the wide West-end streets where the shops are closed early, and are ever

waylaying the passengers at every corner; and in such company as this did those young men frequent the fronts of the bars of gorgeous gin-palaces, without ever deigning to turn a pitying eye upon those poor wretches, who, with trembling hands, and hollow eyes, and emaciated frames (the care-worn features of old age planted upon sunken and youthful shoulders) hourly rush in and pour down their parched throats the fiery poison, that they may for a brief hour or two stupify their sorrows. Women, whose career of crime is sometimes closed in the waters of



THE SERPENTINE ;

while the bonnet and shawl which is found upon the bank, is often all that remain behind to lead to their

identity; and if their names are recorded at all, it is amid those entries of vice kept at the police-courts, which record only committals and re-committals, charges, and counter-charges, tables of stolen property, and midnight brawls; and such is all that is known of their sad, "eventful history." It will be readily supposed that such a life as Augustus Errantdale was now leading could not be supported without great expenditure; for even the cleverest sharpers find it a difficult task to live, with all their dexterity in the art of cheating. His demands upon his mother for money became daily more clamorous. For a length of time he succeeded by entreaties; then by preying upon her fears, and threatening what he would do, unless she supplied him with money; and, when milder measures failed, he had recourse to abusing and brow-beating her; turning the tables upon her without mercy, and telling her to her face, that "she had brought him up to be a gentleman, and whilst there was the means, he would live up to the character." So long as she had the power, she furnished him with funds, until she soon found that, if he was not checked in some way or another, she should cease to possess the power, unless she made honest Job acquainted with his proceedings. And she soon discovered that scarcely a week passed over but that some valuable article was missing. Bracelet followed brooch, the gold watch succeeded the gold guard-chain,

the diamond ring, which had been her pride whilst she was Miss Arabella Allshaw, next went; and, finally, the long golden ear-rings, which had glittered many a night whilst she was on the look-out for a husband. When her treasures of jewellery were exhausted, he began to ransack her wardrobe; and then it was that Miss Fowling might be seen figuring in some splendid Cashmere which had once been worn in pride by his mother; costly pieces of silks and satins vanished from the drawers; and when there was nothing more to lay hold of, he next began with his father, and walked off with honest Job's gold repeater. Then it was that the storm burst forth, for hitherto all his numerous robberies had been kept a secret from his father; so, at last, with tears in her eyes, his mother was compelled to confess all.

In most matters honest Job Errantdale was a firm and determined man. He listened to all she told him without evincing the least sign of passion. The harshest expression he uttered was, that she was in a great measure to blame for the manner in which she had brought him up. "From the first," continued Job, "it was ever your study to screen his faults, and deceive me. At your request, I have allowed him a hundred a year to spend in whatever way he pleases, without accounting for a farthing of it; beyond this I will never go, unless I see a complete alteration in him. As for the property he has stolen, I shall set about recovering it in my own

way." In vain were all her tears and entreaties, begging of him not to make it public—not to disgrace her son. Job remained firm as a rock; and the next time Master Augustus Errantdale dishonoured home with his presence, to his great astonishment and indignation, he found an inspector of police ready to receive him. "I have long since given up all hopes of reclaiming you," said Job, in a low, measured tone; "and were it not that I wish to spare your mother's feelings any further shock, I would at once give an order for your committal, and have you tried at the next Assizes for felony. The inspector shall go round with you, and redeem every article which you have stolen; after they are all restored, and I perceive some reformation in your conduct, I will then tell you what it is my intention to do for the future. But until some great and favourable change has taken place, let me never see your face again."

Silent, pale, and crest-fallen, Augustus Errantdale left the house in custody of the inspector of police, who followed his every footstep, and never, for one moment, trusted him out of his sight. He carried with him a list of every article of the missing property, down to the very shawl, which he found upon Miss Fowling's shoulders, and the satin slippers, which he compelled her to take from off her feet, and which she would have hurled at the head of her dupe, had she not been awed by the presence of the inspector. As she retired, she

mocked him with a low curtsey, and said, "she was sorry she had so long disgraced herself by keeping company with a common thief." All these, and many more humiliating things, was the once proud Augustus Errantdale compelled to bear; for he knew that there was no alternative but to obey, or be committed to



COLDBATH-FIELDS' PRISON.

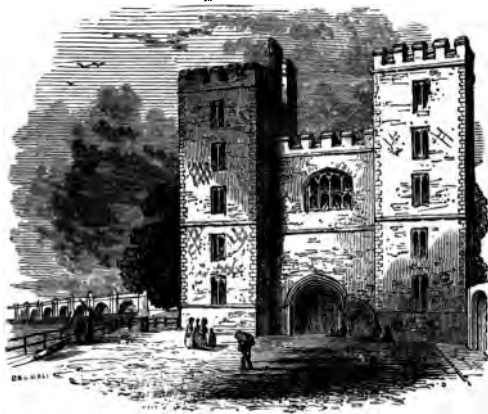
Nor was this the worst of all; what he had done soon reached the ears of his companions; and, although they hesitated not to rob and cheat at dice or cards, and considered every advantage which they could take in gambling, as being only fair, still they scouted the society of an open thief, and, with the exception of one or two who had fallen into the lowest state of degrada-

tion, Master Errantdale found himself suddenly all but companionless. The first act of the young midshipman was to write him a severe letter, and "cut" his society at once. Job had forbidden Augustus his home, and taken apartments for him in rather a humble neighbourhood, with a respectable old couple whom he had known in his earlier years; and you may readily imagine the effect that so many sudden changes had upon him. Beyond paying the rent of the apartments and allowing him one pound a week, no persuasion of Mrs. Errantdale's could induce honest Job to go, or render further pecuniary aid; and as the doors of the gaming-houses were now closed against him, he had no choice left, but either to redeem his character, or join himself to a lower order of society than he had hitherto been accustomed to. For several weeks the balance seemed equally poised between good and evil. If he made no attempt to reach virtue on the one hand, neither on the other did he seem to wish to form a closer acquaintanceship with vice; and the reports of the worthy people with whom he lodged became at last so favourable, in statements of the good hours which he kept—the little company that he saw, and other (to appearance) commendatory changes, that, added to the entreaties of Mrs. Errantdale, they so overcame the scruples of Job, that he was allowed to leave his House once a week.

Young readers be mistaken in his

character: if he was not so bad as he before had been, it was only because he lacked the means. There was still the same will, but not the power. His was not a refraining from evil for the sake of that which is good, but because the former was no longer within his grasp. True, he seemed more silent, more reserved, his bold bearing altered, his peremptory tone subdued; but beneath this apparently calm surface, passions rolled darker, and deeper, and stronger, than had hitherto agitated the face of the waters—they wanted but vent to commence their destructive work. For now, there was a wish to be revenged upon the companions who had shunned and humiliated him; upon the woman who had deceived and insulted him; upon the keepers of gaming-houses who had refused him admission; upon the proprietors of gin-palaces who would not give him credit; and upon every other human being who did not treat him the same as they had done before he was discovered to be a thief. He was not at all sorry for what he had done, but only because he had been found out; and many a time, while his foolish mother attributed his silence to shame, in his own mind he was meditating new methods of plunder, and studying the best means to escape undiscovered. To accomplish these schemes, he now set himself seriously to work to win the good opinion of his yet lenient father. He seemed to listen attentively to all the advice which honest Job gave

him; he accompanied the unsuspecting old man to church on the Sabbath; offered him his arm when they went out together for a walk—for the step of Job Errantdale was not so firm as it had been twenty years before, when many a time he had led the very son (who was now studying how he should rob and deceive him), by the hand, in the beautiful mornings of summer, to look upon the river in the front of



LAMBETH PALACE.

At length fairly reinstated once more in his own home, and standing higher in his father's favour than he had ever before done, no marvel that greater confidence was placed in him, and no one was prouder

than Job Errantdale himself to witness such an unexpected change. By degrees, the kind-hearted and forgiving old father began to entrust even money-matters into his hand; sent him to his banker's with cheques, and to pay the monthly bills of the tradesmen whom he dealt with round about the neighbourhood, and to order whatever was wanted in the household; for, be it remembered, Job Errantdale was now seventy years of age. Nor did the reformation of Augustus Errantdale promise to end in these attentions. There was a young lady, an orphan, a great favourite of Job's, who had long borne the snubbings, and attempted-lady-like rebukings, of Mrs. Errantdale, without ever murmuring, or evincing a sign of impatience. Job had attended the death-bed of her father years before, and had made a solemn promise that he would watch over and protect her whilst it pleased God to spare him; and well had he kept his word, for the conduct of his son had at length established Job as sole master of Dale House. When trouble came, Mrs. Errantdale resigned the reins of authority without a word, and, as ever out of evil good is sure to spring to some one, so had the situation of Anne the orphan become more agreeable and pleasant, ever since the outrages committed by Master Augustus Errantdale. For the sake of his parents, she overlooked his delinquencies, and the attentions of Augustus towards her seemed to afford honest Job pleasure; for he, alas!

fondly believed that the character of his son had undergone a thorough reformation; and one night, when his heart was warmed with a comfortable glass of brandy-and-water, as they sat together, he said, "Augustus, it was once a wish nearest my heart—long since abandoned, it is true, but now revived again, never more I trust to be given up—it is a wish nearest my heart that I should see you united together; that once done, I could then depart in peace. You must long, ere now," continued Job, with deep emotion, "have discovered that the pleasures sought in a life of dissipation end only in pain and disappointment; that true happiness can but be found in the comforts of home, and with a virtuous woman who cheerfully goeth about her household duties. And now," added Job, emptying his glass at a mouthful, and abruptly cutting asunder his lecture, "have you any objection to marry Anne?"

"None in the world," answered Augustus, "if you desire it," thrusting his finger into his waistcoat-pocket as he spoke, to feel if the paper which was deposited there was safe, for he had scarcely heard a word which his honest father had said, saving the last sentence, so busily were his thoughts engrossed in thinking over what sum he should fill up the blank cheque for, which he had purloined that day from his father's cheque-book; for, unknown to his father or mother, he had but two or three days before again renewed his acquaintance-

ship with Miss Fowling; and she had gently hinted, that she thought, if nicely managed, it was possible for him to draw out all the money his father had in his banker's hands, and then they might set off together comfortably for America. Augustus named five hundred pounds as a bold sum; but she tossed up her head at the mention of it, and said that a thousand was as easily written as five hundred, and, while he was about it, he might as well be hung for a sheep as a lamb, "for you know, my dear Augustus," added she, "it will be all the same, when we are once safe out of



ST. KATHERINE'S DOCKS."

The following morning was the time appointed to put this daring scheme into execution; and the young rascal

had so far perfected himself in penmanship during the six months he had spent at home, that he could readily imitate his father's signature to the very letter. He had already tried the experiment at the bank, by destroying a cheque which his father had written out, and filling up another for the same amount in his own handwriting, which was cashed without hesitation. Next morning he arose early, and signed the cheque in his father's name for the sum of one thousand pounds; and as he was already well known at the banking-house, and chatted familiarly to the cashier about some houses which his father had just purchased, also drawing the amount in two separate five hundred pounds Bank of England notes, the transaction created no suspicion. He then hastened off to the Bank of England, and as he had gone there several times on his father's business, and boldly backed the notes with his name, and the address "Dale House," the thousand pounds were handed over to him in small notes and gold.

Meantime, Miss Fowling was awaiting his return at the foot of London Bridge, and, going into a neighbouring tavern, he put one hundred pounds in notes into her hand, and stowed away the rest about his person in the best manner he could. They then set off together to a shipping agent's to book their berths for America, accompanied by a suspicious-looking young man, who appeared more like a thief than a sailor, but whom

the young woman said was an acquaintance of her mother's, and that he had himself before been in America. He had a great deal to say about what was necessary for them to take out on their voyage; knew no end of people who dealt in the very articles they would require; could effect for them a saving of at least twenty per cent in everything they purchased; and so he went on chatting down the thronged thoroughfare of Thames-street, until the crowd compelled them to separate, Augustus leading the way, when, turning round at the front of the



CUSTOM HOUSE,

he perceived that Miss Fowling and her sea-faring companion had given him "the slip," and carried off with

them the hundred pounds. An honest man would have informed the first policemen he had met with of the robbery, but, as our readers are well aware, Augustus Errantdale had his own reasons for saying nothing about it.





CHAPTER XI.

CONTAINING A FULL DESCRIPTION OF JACK HARDY'S WEDDING—WITH WHAT WAS WORN, SAID, AND DONE ON THE OCCASION—TO WHICH IS ALSO ADDED, AN ACCOUNT OF BETTY'S "FLITTING."

THE sun never shone brighter than it did on the morning that ushered in the marriage of Jack Hardy and Mary Rose ; all London-road was alive ; and, as for the neighbourhood of the Elephant-and-Castle, it looked as busy

as it does on the Derby day. A flag waved over the Alfred's Head, and another was placed on the top of the Rockingham-Arms opposite; the Highlander that stood at the tobacco-shop door, facing Jack's shed, was dusted clean to honour him; and the silver tea-urn at the grocer's that morning received an extra rub. Jack was dressed in an olive-coloured frock-coat; a light waistcoat of a very neat pattern; and trowsers remarkable for nothing but the chasteness of the stripe, which blended into the underground colour. The only things that smacked at all of gaiety were the blue-and-white silk neckerchief, and the handsome nosegay, that adorned his buttonhole.

Although he looked a little bashful, still there was the same smile of good-nature playing about his face; and, when his dear old mother called him aside to say a few words to him, before Mary came, you might have seen two big tears standing in Jack's clear and honest eyes. But Mary came at last, with her father and mother, in the light cart, and another young woman, who was to be the bridesmaid. She looked like the flower that bore her name, a very rose in her beauty; and she had dressed her hair with these flowers, fresh as she had that morning gathered them in the garden which she called her own. Oh how well that spotless white dress sat upon her; there was not a wrinkle in the back, and the skirt floated out, graceful as the wings of a swan;

nothing, however, could dissuade her from having her bonnet trimmed with blue ribbon; for she said, "True blue is Jack's favourite colour, and I must strive to please him now."

A young friend of Jack's accompanied them, and they walked to Newington church, after the good old fashion of our forefathers. At every corner, a little group was congregated to see the bride; for everybody in the neighbourhood knew Jack Hardy and his mother Betty, and the loud huzzaing and clapping of hands was almost deafening. Jack took off his hat in acknowledgment of such hearty greetings, while Mary hung down her head and blushed; for, as she said afterwards, "if Jack had been the Emperor of Russia, she did not think he could have attracted more notice." As they went along, he thought how time had flown; and he remembered how, only a few years before, he had rested at the front of that very church with his first barrow-load of fruit and vegetables; for old Nanny the apple-woman was there to see Jack married; and she took off her shoe, and threw it after him for good luck, which much amused a bright-eyed little lady, who was looking out of her chamber-window opposite the church. You should have heard Jack repeat the ceremony after the clergyman; it was none of your cold echoes, but uttered as if his heart was in every word he said; and as Nanny, who was present, remarked afterwards to Betty Hardy, that

she was sure, with a little practice, Jack would be able to preach in



WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

Then Mary was so confused, because Jack kissed her the instant they got out of church, and said, "Now, Mary, you are my wife, and all the world can't take you from me." Jack said he "felt so happy, that if the Queen had stood by, he couldn't have helped it." Oh what a wedding-cake they had! such a size! and so good, that it almost melted in the mouth. And Betty, poor old woman! she was so busy in preparing the wedding-dinner, that, although she had both Mrs. Rose and Nanny to help her, as she said, "she hardly knew what to do first; for there was the plum-pudding to boil, and the salmon; and the ducks to roast before the fire;

and so many kinds of vegetables to cook, that, in spite of the large sirloin of beef, and the pigeon-pie, which were sent to the bakehouse, she hardly knew how she should get through it all;" but she did get through it. Honest Job Errantdale had not yet discovered that his son had that very day robbed him of a thousand pounds, when he sat down and partook of Jack's wedding-dinner; and a capital speech did he make when he drank the health of the young married couple. Not that Job used long, fine-sounding words; not a bit of it; but what he said somehow or another went right into the heart, and one tear followed another so fast down Jack's honest and labour-tanned cheeks, that Mary at last placed her hand upon his, and cried, to keep him company; dear girl! she could not help it. Betty was past weeping; her poor thin lips quivered more than once; but there was a proud flash in her eye, when she heard the good deeds of her son rehearsed; and when Job had finished speaking, she added, scarcely conscious that she had spoken, "God above knows it's all true." Then several of the old neighbours came in, to take a glass of wine after dinner; and all the poor people who were Jack's customers had a glass that day, and a bit of the bride-cake; and his health and happiness was drunk so many times, and by every one with such sincerity, that you would have thought Jack was one of the most important men in the parish. Then there were two or three poor

worthy old people in the Fishmongers' Almshouses, whom Betty had washed for when they were better off, and she sent each of them a rare good dinner by Nanny, and a bottle of wine amongst them to drink her son's health. For Betty said, "I should like all who knew me in the days of my trial and trouble, to be happy to-day, for I've a deal to be thankful for, and God has been very good to me, and no poor mother was ever blessed with a better son."

Job Errantdale sighed, as he contrasted Jack's conduct with his own son's, and said, "Would to Heaven that I had never borne the name of father."

After dinner, Jack took his handsome wife out for a walk, and showed her all the fine shops at the West-end, and bought her no end of pretty things in



BURLINGTON ARCADE,

for right proud was he of her; and well he might, for she was the very perfection of rustic beauty. They rode home; for it was agreed that they should return to Sydenham to tea, and remain there for a few days, while Mr. and Mrs. Rose took up their residence with Betty. Oh how proudly did Jack drive that day, and every now and then he kept looking at Mary, and then at the people who passed by, as if to say, "Yes, you may look, she's my wife, and I don't care who knows it." You would have thought Jack had all at once turned poetical, for he kept pointing out first the beauty of this place, and then of that, until even Mary, who was one of the sweetest-tempered creatures in the world, could not help saying, "Why, I've seen them all scores of times before, Jack, and I don't perceive any difference."

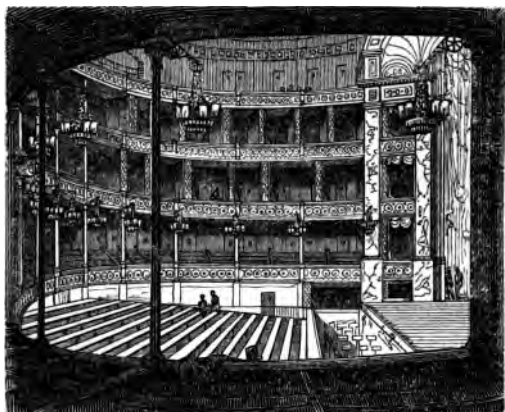
When they reached Sydenham, Jack proposed that they should have tea in the summer-house. "I should like it much," said Jack; "it will recal old times, when you were ill, dad, and Mary was sad, and we were afraid to speak above a whisper. I never thought, then, that I should look upon the old garden again with the same light heart that I do now. Humour me this time, and let the foreman, and his wife, and children be sent for, and be merry for once; he did his duty, when his help was needed, and much as you have been pleased to praise me, I should only have managed very badly without John."

The foreman, and his wife, and children were sent for; and they had their tea in the summer-house, and chatted about old times, whilst the children tumbled about on the grass-plot; and Mr. Rose kicked Jack's foot, as he sat opposite to him, and, pointing to the little ones, said, "Jack, I shall be proud when I see one or two of thine rolling about in that manner. Won't I show them how to shake the apples down, and gather the strawberries. I know their fond, old grandad will spoil them; but they'll love him all the better for it, Jack."

"Don't talk so, father," said Mary, without raising her eyes, "whatever would people say, if they heard you? I'll shake them, that I will, if they meddle with the fruit."

But I cannot tell you half of what was said in that little summer-house, nor how Jack sang a song, and Mr. Rose joined in chorus; and then Mary, after much persuasion, warbled Shakspeare's little fragment of "Hark! hark! the lark," &c.; and how, when the twilight came, they went into the house, and two or three neighbours and old friends of the gardener's were invited to supper; how they drank Jack's health, and said they should be proud to have him for a neighbour, and paid Mary such compliments as made her blush again; and how, when they called her Mrs. Hardy, she thought it was Betty they were speaking to; with other matters, which I have not time to tell you about.

Then, next day, Jack brought his pretty wife to London, and at night took her to



COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE,

where they saw *Romeo and Juliet*, which was so affecting, that Jack was compelled to take Mary out before the play was finished; and as they rode home in the moonlight, she asked Jack such strange questions about love, and such like, and what he would do, if she were dead; and would he die with her; and did he love her as much as *Romeo* did *Juliet*; and wouldn't he like to die on the same day she did—she should, and be put in the same coffin with Jack—it would be so comfortable to have company; that poor Jack was at last sadly puzzled to answer her, and was glad when they reached Sydenham.

It had long been understood between Jack and Mrs. Rose that, when he was married, he should give up his shop in the London-road, and take the sole management of the market-gardener's wholesale business in the Borough-market; and that Betty Hardy should in future take up her residence in Sydenham; for, as Mrs. Rose said, "although mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law seldom agreed, yet there was no rule without an exception, and she considered Betty such an exception;" and when preparations were made for Betty's removal, and the old-fashioned furniture was to be taken at a valuation, (as neither Jack nor his wife thought it very fit for a young couple who set out in the world with such bright prospects), it was quite amusing to see how many things poor old Betty's heart still clung to, and which she would on no account consent to sell. She would never part with this article, because it was the first which Jack bought her, and that she had made her mind up never to part with, so long as ever she lived. One thing reminded her of old times, and another she had when her poor husband was alive; and if a third was old-fashioned, and a little bit rickety, she should never have another in place of it she liked so well; as to a fourth, Nanny, the old apple-woman, had often admired it; and a fifth was bought out of the money which Mr. Errantdale lent her dear Jack, and she should always keep it for his sake. So Betty run on with her

choice catalogue, until there were but very few things left that she could be persuaded to part with. They recalled old times, and were linked with old home associations. From them she dated her ups and downs in the world; for in her mind they were lettered over with many a sorrow and many a joy; in them she saw the dark and the bright blended together, and there read many a written legend, which no eye but her own could see. And Jack loved her too well to erase one letter from these treasured tablets of her memory. Oh! with what delight did Betty superintend the loading of that large van of goods! how carefully did she stow away some old tea-pot which had lost half its spout, and pack up the warming-pan, which Jack had bought her, in no end of wrappers, that it might not be bruised; and when all was completed, she mounted on the top of the van, and sat with the old-fashioned looking-glass on her knee, for she would not have had that old mirror broken for the world, as Jack had amused himself for many an hour when he was a child by looking into it. God bless her dear old heart; the tears fairly trickled down her cheeks, when the neighbours gathered about her to bid her good-bye. As she said, when she got to Sydenham, "It was many a long day since she had had such a good crying bout, and yet she didn't feel unhappy at all; but for a poor old washerwoman to be so respected, it was very trying—that it was."



CHAPTER XII.

IN WHICH WE ARRIVE AT THE END OF OUR STORY, AND SHOW WHAT BEFEL AUGUSTUS ERRANTDALE—AND HOW HONEST JOB RESOLVED TO MAKE HIS WILL, ON DIVERS AND SUNDRY CONDITIONS, WHICH REMAIN TO BE FULFILLED.

It so chanced that, a day or two after Augustus Errantdale had drawn out the thousand pounds, honest Job had occasion to call at the Bank, and was, of course, soon made acquainted with the forgery and the robbery. Pale, trembling and speechless, the half-broken-hearted father stood, incapable of taking any measures for the recovery of the money—not so with the banker, he imme-

diately dispatched a confidential clerk, who ascertained the number of the notes into which the larger bills had been changed, and returned with the full particulars, that two hundred pounds had been paid in gold. An hour after, every banking-house and police-station were made acquainted with the robbery. A hand-bill was also issued, without consulting Job, offering a handsome reward, and describing Master Errantdale, to the very cock of his hat, neck-tie, and his breast-pin ; and how he invariably walked with his hand behind him in his coat-pocket. Two days after, Miss Fowling and her sailor-like-looking friend were taken up in the act of changing a twenty pound note. Master Augustus was sauntering idly along at the front of the



EAST INDIA HOUSE,

regretting that he had been so foolish as to give his fair siren the hundred pounds, and hesitating whether he should go and take a berth for America by himself, make a short trip to France, visit the Isle of Wight, or have a jaunt to Gravesend or Greenwich, or peep in at some of his old West-end haunts, when his eye was arrested by half-a-dozen people, who were busily engaged reading a hand-bill. With his hand in his coat-pocket, as per description, and a cigar in his mouth, he strutted up, and, beginning at "Twenty Pounds Reward," he saw his own name most accurately spelt, and his person not very flatteringly described; and, just as he had finished reading it, a man, who also was looking over the bill at the same time, turned to him and said, "I say, my young swell, if I'd met you on board of a steamer, making off with the money, I should have made a grab at you, and tried for the twenty sovs." An old experienced policeman was at that moment passing, and overhearing the remark, and struck by what appeared to be an immense weight in one of Master Errantdale's coat-pockets, he laid hold of his collar in an instant. The stranger, at the same moment, seized upon his opposite arm, exclaiming, "I discovered him first." The policeman threatened what he would do, but the stranger refused to loose his hold; one word led to another, and a crowd of course soon congregated, and, without offering any resistance, or uttering a single

word, the young thief was dragged off to the station-house. Miss Fowling and her friend had just arrived before him, and, for once in his life, he really did see the young woman shed a few downright tears. Both parties were instantly searched, and, with the exception of a few pounds, the whole of the money was found upon them. Miss Fowling tried by all means to engage her poor dupe's attention; she placed her hand upon his arm, and exclaimed, "oh, Augustus!" but he shook her off indignantly, confessed to the forgery, and, without in any way criminating her, owned that he had given her the hundred pounds to keep for him. As the magistrate was still sitting, the case was at once brought before him, and Miss Fowling and her friend were afterwards discharged, for Augustus, for once in his life, boldly took all the blame upon himself, he well knowing that it would have availed him nothing had he done otherwise; and his fair Eliza was at last thoroughly ashamed of herself; nor did Augustus even turn his head to look after her as she left the court. As only the clerk of the Bank had hitherto appeared against him, Augustus was remanded until the next day, and locked up for the night in a cell. The tidings of what had occurred were not long in reaching his father. Honest Job had apprised his wife of what had happened, and she, poor woman, was almost heart-broken. The thoughts of her son being in a prison, had really a serious effect upon her.

and she fainted away. After some time, Job and the servant succeeded in restoring her, and she became more reconciled, having extracted a promise that she should at once be allowed to visit her son. A cab was called; and, accompanied by her husband, they drove to the station-house, and were admitted to see the prisoner. The heart of Mrs. Errantdale smote her, when she thought of the manner in which she had brought him up, and the numberless faults which she had from time to time concealed from her husband; and it was truly painful to witness her sorrow, and to see how fondly she still hung over her fallen son. The fond, foolish mother was in every action revealed; for, as she said, "with all his faults, he is still my child."

There was something solemn and almost awful in the voice of the father as he addressed his son. He began calmly, by taxing him with ingratitude; demanded, if, in the whole course of his life, he had been guilty of an action of unkindness towards him; and, as the old man's voice rose with excitement, he poured forth a rough natural eloquence, which at last drew forth tears from the eyes of the hardened young sinner. "From childhood," continued Job, "your life has been one of ease and luxury; the bread you ate you never toiled for; the clothes you wore you never contributed to the purchase of; they were all derived from the labour of my earlier years; and this is my reward. When I contrast your

conduct with that of Jack Hardy, I cannot help, from my heart, cursing the day that ever I lived to be called "father." He, whom both your mother and yourself ever treated unkindly, has raised for himself an honourable name, and attained a respectable station in life, which makes everybody feel proud who can claim an acquaintanceship with him; while you are a shame and a disgrace to all who have the misfortune to be related to you. Your mother wishes me not to prosecute, to transport you for this forgery and robbery," continued Job, speaking as if moved by some deep solemn determination. "Being your father, I might forego the injuries you have inflicted upon me and the disgrace you have brought upon your family; might still continue to walk the streets without raising my head or eyes, even when men pointed, and said one to another, 'there goes the father of a thief;' but still I feel that I should be acting unjustly to honest men, were I to let loose such a villain upon the world. One thing, however, I will do; I have an old acquaintance, who possesses an estate in a remote corner of America; next week he is going over to look after it. You can write;—he wants some one to keep his accounts. You can steal nothing there. If you have a mind to accompany him, you may; if not, I will appear against you, and, the law shall take its course. If you go, and, after the lapse of seven years, I hear such reports of your conduct as are satisfactory, and am alive, I

will make such provision for you as shall leave you comfortable for the remainder of your life ; if I die, you shall still be rewarded according to your behaviour, for so will I arrange my affairs before my death. Beyond a sufficient annuity to your mother, I shall leave the half of what I possess to Jack Hardy and his heirs for ever ; the remaining half will be your own, if you deserve it ; if not, it also will go to him ; and now," added Job sternly, " I look upon you for the last time, even if I am spared until the expiration of that period."

Augustus threw himself upon his knees ; but the old man turned away without speaking another word, and left him in the cell with his mother.

The interview between Mrs. Errantdale and her son we pass over ; severe as the terms were, he accepted them ; and, when the time arrived, he left England according to Job's arrangement, nor could the tears of his wife prevail upon Job to see him before he embarked ; for, although Job Errantdale, by thus acting, warred against the natural kindness of his disposition ; still, as he said, " there are times when we ought not to let our feelings interfere with our duties ; for it is better to sacrifice affection, than encourage vice."

Though there is much truth in the sentence, still we cannot wholly acquit honest Job. Had Job but begun with that firmness with which he ended, in spite of the pain and trouble he would have met with in the outset,

he would have accomplished his object while his son was younger; and it would have been better, had he allowed Mrs. Errantdale a few more fainting fits and Master Augustus a few more stripes, than to have endured what he did for the sake of "peace and quietness," which ought never to be purchased at too great a price.

And here our tale must end; for you can readily imagine what a happy life Jack Hardy led with his pretty little wife; and how comfortable old Betty lived in that beautiful cottage at Sydenham; and what a nice garden Jack planted for her, and how fond the dear old woman was of watering it, and looking after the flowers; and what a splendid nosegay she always made up for Nanny, the applewoman, whenever she came to take a dish of tea with her. Mr. Hardy, as they now call him, has won several prizes with his flowers, and there are few gentlemen in the neighbourhood who lay out their gardens without consulting him, for he possesses a fine natural taste as an ornamental gardener. The last time I saw him, he was lifting one of his children on the back of one of his great fat horses, and his wife was looking on; and if there is a happy family in the world, it is to be found at Rose Cottage. Job Errantdale has heard a good report of his son;—for six months Augustus was confined to his bed, and, when he recovered, a great change had taken place in his mind. He attended church regularly, and his conduct had attracted the at-

tention of the kind clergyman at whose house he frequently spent the evening. Mrs. Errantdale went over to see him, and has not yet returned ; neither does Job appear to be in any hurry to send for her. When they come back, he talks about living at Sydenham, to be near his old friend Jack ; indeed, he is very seldom anywhere else. Dale House is to be sold.



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